

Date of issue: Wednesday, 14 December 2022

MEETING	CABINET	
	Councillor Swindlehurst	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Council Recovery, Forward Strategy & Economic Development
	Councillor Mann	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing & Planning
	Councillor Ajajib	Customer Services, Procurement & Performance
	Councillor Akram	Leisure, Culture & Community Empowerment
	Councillor Anderson	Financial Oversight & Council Assets
	Councillor Bains	Public Protection, Regulation & Enforcement
	Councillor Hulme	Children's Services, Lifelong Learning & Skills
	Councillor Nazir	Transport & The Local Environment
	Councillor Pantelic	Social Care & Public Health
DATE AND TIME:	MONDAY, 19TH DECEMBER, 2022 AT 6.30 PM	
VENUE:	COUNCIL CHAMBER - OBSERVATORY HOUSE, 25 WINDSOR ROAD, SL1 2EL	
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER: (for all enquiries)	NICHOLAS PONTONE 07749 709 868	

SUPPLEMENTARY PAPERS

The following Papers have been added to the agenda for the above meeting:-

* Item 5 was not available for publication with the rest of the agenda.

PART 1

<u>AGENDA ITEM</u>	<u>REPORT TITLE</u>	<u>PAGE</u>	<u>WARD</u>
5.	Remodelling of Children Centres	1 - 134	All



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Slough Borough Council

Report To:	Cabinet
Date:	19 th December 2022
Subject:	Remodelling of Children Centres
Lead Member:	Lead Member for Children's Services
Chief Officer:	Andrew Fraser, Chief Executive and Executive Director: Children's Services
Contact Officer:	Johnny Kyriacou, Associate Director, Education and Inclusion
Ward(s):	ALL
Key Decision:	YES
Exempt:	NO
Decision Subject To Call In:	YES
Appendices:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Needs Assessment Summary 2. Children's Centre Review Report 3. Early Education and Childcare Review Report 4. Centre by Centre Implications Summary 5. Equalities Impact Assessment

1. Summary and Recommendations

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet approval to consult on options for change to Slough Borough Council's (SBC) Children's Centres and the early education and childcare provision delivered from them.

Recommendation:

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 1.2 Authorise a 6 week consultation on options for change to the Council's Children's Centres, including proposals to reduce the number of buildings and reduce the amount of childcare provision being directly provided by the Council.
- 1.3 Note that a report will be presented to Cabinet in the Spring 2023 for a decision on the proposal.

Reason:

1.4 The recommendation is offered so that potential opportunities to improve the support provided to children and families may be explored. The proposal is made within the context of needing to respond to a number of drivers for change including improving preventative work across the partnership, addressing deficiencies in current Children's

Centre arrangements and where feasible, to enable the Council to deliver financial savings as part of its budget setting process and medium-term financial strategy.

1.5 The Governance Review of Slough Borough Council, published in September 2021, highlighted that SBC operates with 10 children's centres for a population of 149 000, generally providing a universal offer, which has not proven to reduce demand in children's services.

1.6 Review work undertaken across the Children's Services system continues to highlight the need to strengthen preventative support for families to address disproportionately high demand for children's social care intervention compared to statistical neighbours. Work is being progressed to develop the prevention and early help offer in Slough to address this issue. Children's Centres have a key role to play in this critical area of family support.

1.7 The recommendations will allow the Council to engage with key stakeholders, current service users and the public in general regarding a potential alternative model of delivery which strengthens current Children's Centre delivery arrangements.

1.8 The decision to enable consultation on these options will support the process of developing services which contribute to the following 2 Council priorities:

- A council that lives within its means, balances the budget and delivers best value services for tax-payers and service users; and
- A borough for children and young people to thrive.

1.9 Needs assessment analysis and associated review findings in relation to Children's Centre provision suggests that there is both a need and an opportunity to develop new ways of working to strengthen the provision of integrated preventative support and early help for families that most need it. The options in this report are therefore concerned with enabling change that will contribute to realising Slough Children First's vision that "every child in Slough should be safe, secure and successful".

1.10 Consultation will focus on obtaining views in relation to the recommended option of creating a new three centre model. A three centre model is preferred because it would enable the proposed new way of working to be introduced and embedded, whilst also allowing for alignment with existing locality based approaches applied by SBC and its partners. It would also allow for future alignment to the development of an integrated 'family network' and family hub model within a revised Early Help Strategy, by creating the early childhood, 0 – 5 year old component of a coordinated 0 – 25 age ranged child and family early help offer in Slough.

1.11 The provision of early education and childcare is a core part of the current Children's Centre offer. 8 of the current 10 Children's Centres provide directly delivered childcare. Identified options for change have a bearing on both the directly delivered childcare and the wider offer of early childhood services. Families may not readily make the distinction between the different elements of service. It is therefore important to make clear reference to how options may impact these two key elements of service and to ensure consultation secures views on potential changes to the service area of childcare alongside associated options for change to the Children's Centre model in general.

1.12 The report is therefore segmented into two related parts so that due reference can be made to each element of service, which have different statutory frameworks. The potential implications of pursuing identified options from both a Children's Centre and an early education and childcare perspective have been set out for consideration. Both will be consulted on should approval be granted to do so.

Commissioner Review

"Rationalising the children's centre provision is the correct way forward in the Council's circumstances. However, it will require an effective programme management regime to be in place. Cabinet needs to ensure this is in place from the outset if the proposals are to be successfully delivered."

2. Report

Children's Centres

Children's Centre Purpose

Strategic Aim

2.1 Children's Centres aim to improve outcomes for young children and their families and reduce inequalities between families in greatest need and their peers.

2.2 Legislation in relation to Children's Centres is contained in the Childcare Act 2006, and underpinned by Sure Start Children's Centres Statutory Guidance, which defines a Children's Centre as a place or a group of places: which is managed by or on behalf of, or under arrangements with, the local authority with a view to securing that early childhood services in the local authority's area are made available in an integrated way; through which early childhood services are made available (either by providing the services on site, or by providing advice and assistance on gaining access to services elsewhere); and, at which activities for young children are provided.

2.3 The Statutory Guidance states that "Centres are as much about making appropriate and integrated services available, as about providing premises in particular geographical areas. A Children's Centre should make available universal and targeted early childhood services either by providing the services at the centre itself or by providing advice and assistance to parents (mothers and fathers) and prospective parents in accessing services provided elsewhere".

2.4 The guidance frames core Children's Centre activity using the following themes:

- child development and school readiness;
- parenting aspirations and parenting skills; and,
- child and family health and life chances.

2.5 SBC has 10 centres across the Borough. The Children's Centre programme seeks to address need by delivering and enabling a range of early childhood services the details of which may be found in the **Children's Centre Review** attached as **Appendix 2**.

2.6 In addition, 8 of the 10 centres provide early years education for 2, 3 and 4 year-olds and day-care services for working parents as a central part of their offer.

2.7 The Council must determine what constitutes sufficient children's centres to meet its local need. When assessing sufficiency local authorities should ensure a network of

centres, that services are within reasonable reach, taking account of distance and availability of transport, together with partners consider how best to support families to access them, target services at those at risk of poor outcomes through effective outreach services, demonstrate effectiveness and availability to meet local need and not close an existing provision unless it can be demonstrated that the outcomes for children, particularly the most disadvantaged, would not be adversely affected.

2.8 Review work has given due consideration to need when determining the options for change to current children's centre arrangements. The detail of this assessment may be found in the **Needs Assessment Summary** attached as **Appendix 1** to this report.

2.9 Needs assessment data indicates that many families in Slough experience prevailing and entrenched challenges in relation to social and health outcomes including those that align with the core purpose of Children's Centres. It can be assumed that these may well be compounded given wider social and economic pressures. These challenges contribute to significant pressure on the children's social care system.

2.10 Associated analysis and review work undertaken in relation to the current Children's Centre model and its programme of activity has found that it is not delivering against core Children's Centre requirements. The outcomes of this review work may be found in the **Children's Centre Review** attached as **Appendix 2** to this report. They are summarised as follows:

Capacity to provide key functions has diminished overtime

2.11 Organisation change and associated redeployment of resources has had a bearing on the current model being able to maintain key functions traditionally undertaken by Children's Centres and has impacted on its capacity to meet need, particular for those most in need of support and therefore impacting on demand for statutory services. The model has evolved to be primarily concerned with the provision of early education and childcare.

2.12 Current arrangements, which include a primary focus on early education and childcare, do not enable the service to carry out the necessary work to systematically assess need, identify those most in need of targeted support and coordinate early childhood services in response.

Core functions and offer maintained but spread thinly and unevenly across the range of centres and associated localities

2.13 The current model delivers core activity across its 10 centres, however the offer is inconsistent in its range with provision not being systematically informed by an assessment of borough-wide and localised need.

Capacity to identify and target those most in need of support is limited

2.14 Current arrangements, which include a primary focus on early education and childcare, do not enable the service to identify and reach out to those most in need of targeted support and fully coordinate early childhood services in response.

Proposal for change

2.15 Needs assessment analysis and associated review of the current Children's Centre model has led to the identification of the following in terms of need for change:

- The need to consolidate resources to enable Children's Centre functions to be renewed;

- The need to enable key Children’s Centre functions to be fulfilled and focused on core Children’s Centre requirements; and
- The recognition that resources and associated approach needs to enable and ensure the coordination and targeting of early childhood services at the most vulnerable.

2.16 In light of the learning arising from review work and consideration of what might best suit Slough in terms of a revised model to meet need, it is proposed to remodel the existing Children’s Centre structure so that it will provide a renewed focus on the core functions of Children’s Centre coordination, outreach and family support. It will do so by reorganising existing arrangements, including the discontinuation of aspects of directly delivered early learning and childcare where there is a case for doing so, to create dedicated resource to undertake these functions, enabling a refreshed approach to identifying need in collaboration with partners and developing and coordinating a renewed offer of Children’s Centre provision in response for example, improved integration and targeting of services with partner agencies to improve outcomes for 0-5 year olds.

2.17 The options have been drafted following consideration of need, what provision is required to meet need and what number of Children’s Centres it would be reasonably practicable for the SBC to provide. They are summarised below:

Children’s Centre Options	Potential benefits	Potential constraints
<p>1. To create a new 3 centre model by closing 7 of the existing 10 Children’s Centres to establish a new model of delivery serviced by the existing Centres at Penn Road, Chalvey Grove and Romsey Close (Recommended)</p>	<p>Renewed and enhanced capacity to develop and coordinate early childhood services</p> <p>Reduces cost and allows for the consolidation of Children’s Centre resources to enable greater targeting of those most in need. This option would see the flexible deployment of dedicated Children’s Centre staff across 3 Centres in order to maximise efficiency.</p> <p>A third children’s centre is required to provide a fit with the borough’s locality strategy, dividing Slough into three areas, north, west and east. The intention is to build up in those three localities a more local offer, bringing services closer to those communities having Penn Road as the third children’s centre will assist with this. Resources will be used flexibly across the Centres with a view to enabling partners to contribute to and invest in centre operations. Penn Road is in a good position; it is accessible and has car parking.</p>	<p>70% reduction in the number of physical Children’s Centre outlets and the associated loss of contact / service access points for families in affected areas, particularly for vulnerable children and families.</p>

	See appendix 4 centre by centre review for a more detailed breakdown of sufficiency and further analysis.	
2. To create a new 2 centre model by closing 8 of the existing 10 Children's Centres to establish a north and south locality model serviced by the existing Centres at Penn Road and Chalvey Grove respectively	<p>Renewed and enhanced capacity to develop and coordinate early childhood services</p> <p>Reduces cost and allows for the consolidation of Children's Centre resources to enable greater targeting of those most in need</p>	80% reduction in the number of physical Children's Centre outlets and the associated loss contact / service access points for families in affected areas, particularly for vulnerable children and families.
3. To create a new 1 centre model by closing 9 of the existing 10 Children's Centres to establish a boroughwide model at Chalvey Grove	<p>Renewed and enhanced capacity to develop and coordinate early childhood services</p> <p>Reduces cost and allows for the consolidation of Children's Centre resources to enable greater targeting of those most in need</p>	90% reduction in the number of physical Children's Centre outlets and the associated major loss of contact / service access points for families in affected areas, particularly for vulnerable children and families.
4. To continue with the current provision of 10 centres or to have less of a reduction of centres than proposed above.	No centre would be closed.	<p>The current model is not targeted at those most in need and therefore does not fulfil the requirements of the statutory guidance. The current model would not meet the savings target and if savings are to be made, the reduction in hours and staffing would be extreme leaving buildings that are not meeting the core functions of a children's centre.</p> <p>Unnecessary revenue would be spent on maintaining buildings instead of investing in non-building based services such as outreach.</p>

2.18 The presented options for change would see the establishing of a new, dedicated Children's Centre resource, enabling a refreshed approach to identifying need in collaboration with partners and developing and coordinating a renewed offer of early childhood services. Key aspects include:

- A consolidated approach centred on the coordination of early childhood services in collaboration with partners;
- A way of working that isn't reliant on the use of existing premises to enable the development and delivery of the early childhood services offer;
- The establishment of dedicated Children's Centre resource to attend to the key functions of coordination, outreach and family support which are not currently being effectively provided; and
- The use of this resource to connect with related resources and functions across the partnership to achieve the aim of Children's Centres making available universal and targeted early childhood services and supporting child and family access to them as part of the developing prevention and early help offer to residents.

2.19 The model would maintain usage of, and operation from retained Centre/s for use as the base from which to assess and map need for early childhood services across the borough in collaboration with partners. It would also work closely with the Asset Disposal Programme team (Housing & Property Directorate) to explore options for related, alternative use of premises no longer designated as Children's Centres. As part of this work it will also consider the full operating costs within the retained premises.

2.20 Existing centres may also be used to continue to house critical joint partnership, early childhood service operations within, as part of the transition process to the new model. However, the designated centre/s in the proposed new model would primarily become the principal operations hub/s for a borough-wide network of early childhood services. The model would align to the developing Early Help Strategy and associated work regarding a family network and family hub approach to delivering coordinated preventative early help to families.

2.21 Continuation of the existing model for Children's Centres is not considered as viable given the findings of associated review work and the need to ensure best value for residents.

2.22 These options will be subject to consultation should approval be granted to do so. Should other viable options be identified during the consultation process, they will inform recommendations for change which will be presented to Cabinet for consideration in due course.

Implementation

2.23 Should approval to consult be granted, a consultation process with key stakeholders will be enacted. If authorised, consultation will commence early in the new year. It will apply a range of processing including both online and direct engagement activity to secure the views of residents and stakeholders on the presented options and potential alternatives. Once the consultation process is concluded, findings will be collated to inform final recommendations for change for presentation to and consideration by Cabinet in due course.

Early Education and Childcare

Strategic aim

2.24 Given the prominent role the direct delivery of early education and childcare plays in SBC's Children's Centre model, separate consideration has been given to this provision to inform options for change to the Children's Centre programme whole.

2.25 The Childcare Act 2006 and the associated statutory guidance for local authorities on Early Education and Childcare, March 2017 requires SBC to secure sufficient childcare, as far as is reasonably practicable, for working parents, or parents who are studying or training for employment, for children aged 0 – 14 (or up to 18 for disabled children).

2.26 The strategic aim of early education and childcare provision is to work with parents, early years practitioners and partner agencies to support the development of all young children, including the most vulnerable, and to help them build the skills and resilience needed to become successful adults, with the capability and willingness to make a positive contribution to society. Allied to this is the associated aim of enabling sufficient childcare to be available to those who need it in Slough.

2.27 It should be noted that by law local authorities should not directly provide childcare unless they are satisfied that no other person is willing to provide childcare for a particular child or group or it is otherwise appropriate to provide it. Local authorities providing childcare directly risks distorting the market, potentially preventing choice and options for small businesses to meet demand. Since 2006 local authorities' role in childcare/early years education has been to focus on market management and ensuring quality of provision.

Childcare sufficiency

2.28 8 of SBC's 10 Children's Centres provide Council managed early education and childcare. Parallel review work has been undertaken, under the wider auspice of the Children's Centre review, to assess this element of provision from a sufficiency and best value perspective. The **Early Education and Childcare Review** is attached as **Appendix 3** to this report.

2.29 The childcare economy is complex. The offer comprises a range of types of provision to meet different needs ranging from free entitlement education to more generic childcare. Capacity types also vary from setting to setting with providers offering a mixed economy of funded places and paid for childcare, some all year round and others term-time only. It is therefore both difficult and unhelpful to try to determine an absolute position in terms of sufficiency.

2.30 Birth data used to forecast demand for example, suggests that current supply of places overall doesn't match demand, however consideration at a more locality-based level indicates a more mixed picture.

2.31 Current data and analysis indicates that Monksfield Way Children's Centre for example operates in a catchment area with a significant surplus of places, whereas Chalvey Grove Children's Centre catchment area has a notable deficit of places. It is important to note that this data does not give a definitive position in relation to supply and demand. Local intelligence gathered during the annual Childcare Sufficiency Assessment is key to building up a more accurate picture of both the supply and the nature of the offer in terms of type and age range and the demand based on a range of data sources including birth rate projections and census data.

2.32 The analysis and review work informing potential options for change to current directly delivered early education and childcare provision via Children's Centres has drawn on a combination of existing data and local intelligence to determine potential options for change. This analysis will be strengthened via both the consultation process and the annual Childcare Sufficiency Assessment once complete. This will be completed before any decisions are made.

2.33 Local intelligence indicates that there are providers in the market who may be interested in developing their provision in response to changes SBC may make to its directly delivered provision. Further work will be undertaken with the wider economy of provider to explore options fully should agreement to consult be given.

2.34 Analysis of the findings of this review has resulted in the following summary conclusions being drawn:

- SBC is delivering early education and childcare via its Children's Centres in areas where analysis suggests there is surplus capacity;
- Analysis also suggests that SBC's directly delivered offer is being provided in areas with sufficient capacity to meet requirements and need in the absence of directly offered provision; and
- SBC is delivering early education and childcare via its Children's Centres at a cost to the Council, ie. the Council is subsidising childcare costs, and that there is scope to reduce this cost by the discontinuation of directly managed provision within the overall context of making changes to its Children's centre delivery model.

2.35 Sufficiency analysis suggests that there is low risk of a significant, negative impact on sufficiency level when considering the discontinuation of SBC delivered early education and childcare provided via the following Children's Centres:

- St Andrews Way;
- Vicarage Way;
- Wexham Road;
- Elliman Avenue; and
- Orchard Avenue.

2.36 A medium level of risk in potential discontinuation of directly delivered provision has been identified for early education and childcare provided from the following Children's Centres:

- Monksfield Way; and
- Penn Road.

2.37 This assessment is informed by consideration of data and intelligence which suggests there may be scope to mitigate against potential discontinuation from a local capacity perspective. However, carefully attention would need be given to how the needs of vulnerable children currently accessing provision at Monksfield Way in particular, would be met should any potential change be agreed for implementation.

2.38 A high level of risk has been identified for provision delivered from the following Children's Centres:

- Romsey Close;
- Chalvey Grove; and
- Yew Tree Road.

2.39 Data and local intelligence indicates that the demand for early learning and childcare in the 3 catchment areas above, where this provision is located is high, with limited scope for external providers to address any reduction in offer in the short to mid-term. Advice received from local independent providers also suggests that some settings in these areas are experiencing significant recruitment challenges impacting on their capacity to meet need.

Proposal for change

2.40 Given the need and opportunity to remodel Children’s Centre arrangements and the fact that the current model primarily concerned with a resourced to deliver childcare, it is proposed that consideration be given to the following summary options for potential discontinuation of directly delivered early education and childcare provided from the centres.

2.41 The information below serves as summary of identified options in relation to the direct delivery of early education and childcare via SBC’s Children’s Centre together with reference to the number of children potential affected by the changes.

Early education and childcare delivery options	Potential benefits	Potential constraints
1. To discontinue all directly delivered early education and childcare provision provided by the Council through its Children’s Centres	Reduces cost and potentially enables the wider economy of providers in the market to expand their provision where demand requires	Full discontinuation would present challenges in ensuring sufficiency requirements are met and access for vulnerable children in particular maintained. Family access choices will also be limited. It would be challenging to enable the market to fully address potential gaps in provision in the short to mid-term.
Total number of children attending provision as of Sept 2022 potentially affected by option for change: 347		Total number of vulnerable children potentially affect by option for change: 197 / 347
2. To discontinue directly delivered early education and childcare provision provided by the Council from 7 Children’s Centres whilst maintaining direct delivery via Chalvey Grove and Romsey Close Children’s Centre and stand alone provision at Yew Tree Road. (Recommended)	Reduces cost and potentially enables the wider economy of providers in the market to expand their provision where demand requires whilst maintaining provision in key areas of need and demand	Discontinuation will present challenges in ensuring sufficiency requirements are met although analysis indicates this risk can be addressed through actions to mitigate impact with particular regard to market engagement and the phasing of change to minimise any negative impact. Due consideration needs to be given to the access needs of vulnerable children in particular

Total number of children attending provision as of Sept 2022 potentially affected by option for change: 176	Total number of vulnerable children potentially affect by option for change: 144 / 176	
3. To discontinue directly delivered early education and childcare provision provided by the Council from 8 Children's Centres whilst maintaining direct delivery Chalvey Grove and stand alone provision at Yew Tree Road.	Reduces cost and enables the wider economy of providers in the market to potentially expand their provision where demand requires whilst maintaining provision in key areas of need and demand	Discontinuation will present challenges in ensuring sufficiency requirements are met although analysis indicates this risk can be addressed through actions to mitigate impact with particular regard to market engagement and the phasing of change to minimise any negative impact. Due consideration needs to be given to the access needs of vulnerable children in particular
Total number of children attending provision as of Sept 2022 potentially affected by option for change: 203	Total number of vulnerable children potentially affect by option for change: 157 / 203	
3. To continue to provide existing childcare arrangements	No changes will be made to existing provision.	<p>The target savings for reducing buildings will not be achieved.</p> <p>The Council will continue to subsidise childcare costs by provision of buildings.</p> <p>The Council will continue to directly provide a significant number of childcare places without a clear rationale as to why this is appropriate, which is contrary to the legislation.</p> <p>The Council continuing to provide a significant number of childcare places has the potential of distorting the market and putting other childcare operators out of business or preventing new providers entering the market.</p>

2.42 It should be noted that the implementation of any of the above options would require careful consideration in terms of transition. The proposed consultation process should be used to increase understanding of the provider market and the scope for it to either assume the undertaking of provision currently provided by SBC where appropriate and feasible to do so or develop provision to address demand where required.

2.43 A phased approach would be required so that families potentially affected by any change are supported to make timely, alternative arrangements for childcare should this be necessary. It should also be noted that careful attention would also need to be paid to

implementation from the perspective of impact on staff whose employment may be affected by any agreed change.

2.44 The table below provides a ‘centre by centre’ summary of the bearing these options have on each of the current centre’s offer of directly delivered early learning and childcare should they be pursued.

Current Children’s Centre location	Maintained as Council delivered early education and childcare		
	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Chalvey Grove	No	Yes	Yes
Elliman Avenue	No	No	No
Monksfield Way	No	No	No
Orchard Avenue	No	No	No
Penn Road	No	No	No
Romsey Close	No	Yes	No
St Andrew’s Way	No	No	No
Vicarage Way	No	No	No
Wexham Road	No	No	No
Yew Tree Road	No	Yes	Yes

Implementation

2.45 Should approval to consult be granted, a consultation process with key stakeholders will be enacted as part of an overall ‘options for change to Children’s Centres’ consultation process.

2.46 Current analysis suggests that a phased approach to enacting change would be required. If the recommended option were to be approved, a three-phase process would be applied, summarised as follows:

2.47 Phase 1: Discontinuation of directly delivered childcare from:

- St Andrews Way;
- Vicarage Way;
- Wexham Road;
- Elliman Avenue; and
- Orchard Avenue.

2.48 Phase 2: Discontinuation of directly delivered childcare from:

- Monksfield Way; and
- Penn Road.

2.49 Discontinuation in phase 2 enabled through engagement with local providers to ensure sufficient provision is in place to meet need.

2.50 Ongoing consideration would be given to future options for maintained provision at Chalvey Grove, Romsey Close and Yew Tree Road allied to continued market engagement activity.

Timescales

2.51 The following indicative milestones and timescales have been drafted for implementation should authorisation be granted to consult on the options for change as outlined.

Milestone	Timescale
Secure cabinet authorisation to consult	19 th December 2022
Commence consultation	Week beginning 9 th January 2023
Conclude consultation process	Week beginning 13 th February 2023
Collate consultation findings and produce final recommendations	Week beginning 20 th 2023
Present final recommendations for Cabinet consideration	Cabinet 20 th March 2023
Commence implementation process	Week beginning 24 th April 2023
Conclude implementation process	July 2023

3. Summary

3.1 Consultation would enable the testing of the options outlined in this report, securing resident and wider stakeholder views on how best to make changes to current arrangements for the provision of the services in question.

3.2 Parallel consideration has been given to the two related areas of service namely, the Children’s Centre programme and SBC delivered early education and childcare. Related review work and analysis has concluded that change is required to both elements in order to re-establish a Children’s Centre delivery model that is able to focus on core Children’s Centre requirements. The combination of the 2 preferred options, would see the creation of an integrated Centre model, that maintained aspects of early learning and childcare, where data and analysis suggest it is essential to do so, whilst releasing resource to enable dedicated Children’s Centre capacity to be created.

3.3 The model may then be aligned to the revised early help strategy in general, and the development of a family network and hub model in particular in order to contribute to a strengthened whole systems process or supporting families.

Background

4.1 As advised, work has been carried out to explore the feasibility of modifying existing arrangements for the provision of Children’s Centres. The detail of this work may be found in appended review reports and is summarised in the main body of this report.

4.2 The following information has been generated from this review work, which has in turn informed the options outlined for consultation:

- Consider reduction in the current number of centres to consolidate the offer and enable an increase in identification and targeting of support for those most in need;
- Consider the application of a ‘centre without walls’ approach by reducing the number of physical centres and developing a more flexible, peripatetic approach to fulfilling the functions of the service;
- Consider the discontinuation of the provision of directly delivered early years provision where data and local intelligence indicates sufficiency levels can be maintained without it and / or; enable the wider economy of providers to take up provision in areas of need where necessary; and
- Work towards ensuring any continuation of directly delivered provision is cost neutral and / or transferred to the market to provide.

4.3 Collective analysis of needs assessment data, review findings and the resultant case for change have informed the drafting of the options referenced in this report.

4.4 Should approval be given, consultation on these options will be undertaken with a view to securing stakeholder views and opinions on potential changes so that recommendations can be produced for Cabinet consideration in due course.

5. Implications of the Recommendation

5.1 Financial implications

5.1.1 The four options in this paper have been costed for savings based on them being independent of each other. The existing budget for Option 4, do nothing, is the base against which the savings of the other 3 options are measured and presented below.

5.1.2 The following table shows the overall saving for each option split between Children's Services cost savings (staffing, supplies and services) and income foregone. Offsetting the total saving achievable is a saving of £277k which was put forward as part of the 2022/23 budget proposals but which as at period 6 is currently not deliverable. The options put forward will enable this outstanding saving to be achieved, hence the total additional budget saving generated by the option selected would be reduced by this amount. The do nothing option results in an ongoing pressure of £277k as this would no longer be deliverable.

Option	Description	Cost saving	Lost Income	Total Savings	Deferred 2022/23 Savings	Further Savings Potential
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
1	3 Children's Centres Romsey Close, Chalvey Grove, Penn Road plus Yew Tree Road Early Education and Childcare provision	1,053	(622)	431	277	154
2	2 Children's Centres and Chalvey and Yew Tree Early Education and Childcare provision	1,564	(1,148)	416	277	139
3	1 Children's Centre	2,348	(1,909)	439	277	162
4	Do nothing	0	0	0	0	(277)

5.1.3 The above reductions in options 1 to 3 ignore the potential reduction in property operating costs such as business rates and utilities. The budget in respect of this expenditure on premises which would no longer be required by the Children's directorate would be upward of £450k and this would revert to the Housing & Property directorate. However this would not result in an immediate saving of this amount as many of these costs would continue to be incurred until such time as an alternative use/occupant could be found. Were a new occupant (e.g. another

childcare provider) identified then these costs could be recharged to the tenant, along with a commercial rent. This would be subject to planning permission, other conditional restrictions on use, capital investment etc and so no estimate has been made in this regard and does not form part of the decision requested in this paper.

5.2 Legal implications

5.2.1 The Council's duties are multi-faceted and include the following legal duties

- To improve well-being of young children in their area, and reduce inequalities between young children in their area.
- Make arrangements to secure that early childhood services in their area are provided in an integrated manner to facilitate access to services and maximise benefit - early childhood services include early years, but not exclusively. This must be informed by information about the views of young children and the quantity and quality of early childhood services and where those services are provided. The duty includes requirements to involve parents and prospective parents, early years providers and other relevant people in making and implementation of arrangements.
- The duty to work with relevant partners and provide staff, goods, services, accommodation or other resources or to pool funding of relevant partners - relevant partners are health bodies.
- The duty to provide sufficient childcare for working parents - this is a duty to secure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that provision of childcare is sufficient.
- The duty to secure early years provision free of charge for specific children.
- The power to assist any person who provides or proposes to provide childcare; make arrangements with any other person for the provision of childcare and provide childcare (but only if satisfied that no other person is willing to provide the childcare for a particular child or group of children or it is otherwise appropriate to provide it).

5.2.2 Where arrangements provided for provision of childcare in consideration for financial assistance the council must exercise functions with a view to securing that the provider of the childcare meets any requirements imposed.

5.2.3 There is no duty to directly provide childcare, rather it is intended that formal childcare should be provided in the main by providers in the private and voluntary sectors and schools with the cost being met by parents, some of whom will be eligible to claim tax credits in respect of qualifying childcare.

5.2.4 Ongoing consideration will need to be given to the legislative framework for this area of provision so that any recommendations determined for future consideration following consultation, are informed by the need to meet statutory duties as outlined.

5.3 Risk management implications

Risks	Potential impact	Mitigating actions
1. Failure to maintain Children's Centre sufficiency	<p>Breach of statutory duty and potential resultant action including Judicial Review.</p> <p>Inability of families, particularly the vulnerable to access early childhood services.</p>	<p>Ensure new model has capacity to deliver core functions.</p> <p>Work with partners so that core offer is maintained with emphasis placed on revised model coordinating offer and providing outreach and family support.</p>
2. Failure to maintain early education and childcare sufficiency	<p>Breach of statutory duty and potential resultant action including Judicial Review.</p> <p>Inability of families to access early education and childcare with residual impact on child (early education) and family (employment risk for example).</p> <p>Inability of vulnerable children including those with SEND to access early education.</p>	<p>Undertake analysis to assess impact on demand and sufficiency.</p> <p>Work with the market to encourage and enable alternative provision as required.</p> <p>Phase implementation in order to manage impact. Work with external providers to support and enable inclusion.</p>
3. High levels of resident dissatisfaction with changes	High level of complaints, members enquiries and / or petitions.	Carry out robust consultation and develop and implement detailed communications plan.
4. Failure to meet statutory requirement to effectively consult on changes	Breach of statutory duty and potential Judicial Review.	Carry out robust consultation and develop and implement detailed communications plan.
5. Inability to continue to accommodate core offer partnership activity	Inability of families to access critical early childhood services, particularly midwifery and health visiting.	Phase implementation to manage impact and maintain key partnership services from existing sites where necessary in the interim.
6. Inability to make alternative use of assets, surplus to service requirements	Sites remain vacant and require ongoing maintenance.	Research potential alternative use options informed by scope and limitations of facilities. This work will be driven primarily by the Asset Disposals Programme Team to ensure that, where possible, surplus assets will be brought forward for disposal and

		any retained are effectively managed through the future Asset Management Plan.
7. Failure to manage transition effectively	Parents experience major difficult in finding alternative provision in a timely fashion.	Phase implementation in order to manage impact with particular regard to needs of parents in finding alternatives.
8. Clawback of capital grant afforded to construct centres	Financial impact on cost and savings projections.	Determine cost and factor in to cost and savings profile.
9. Loss of preventative capacity which minimises children's social care demand	Increase in demand for statutory children's social care.	Work with targeted early help and Children's Social Care to manage transition as part of Early help Strategy development.
10. Insufficient capacity to lead and implement change	Change is inadequately led and managed resulting in timelines and deliverables not being achieved.	assigning adequate and appropriate leadership and operational implementation capacity to deliver the project successfully.

5.4 Environmental implications

5.4.1 No environmental implications identified.

5.5 Equality implications

4.5.1 This report presents options for making changes to the current children's centre delivery model. It seeks to secure approval to consult on the options presented.

5.5.2 An interim Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) has been drafted and attached as appendix 5 to this report. They will be reviewed and further developed subject to the approval of recommendations and the outcomes of related consultation activity.

5.6 Procurement implications

5.6. No procurement implications identified

5.7 Workforce implications

5.7.1 All presented options for consultation have workforce implications which include the potential need to consult with the staff on proposed changes to the service should they be recommended and agreed. Staff will be actively engaged in the consultation process with any further workforce implications determined and addressed, subject to the outcomes of the consultation process and any resultant changes that may be recommended.

5.8 Property implications

5.8.1 Responsibility for the effective management of the ten assets sits within the Property and Housing Directorate and the recently adopted Disposals Strategy includes the following provisions with regards disposal/leasing the Council's properties:

5.8.2 As a general principle, any new property arrangements should be on commercial terms and decisions should be made informed by the full cost of an asset. For lease arrangements, this will be on a Full Repairs and Insurance [FRI] basis with market-facing commercial terms unless otherwise justified.

5.8.3 There is a property cost with regards the provision of this service that needs to be accounted for within and covered by the Children's Services Directorate to show the true cost of this service provision and to not show as a pressure within the Property and Housing Directorate.

5.8.4 Each of the options being considered within this paper have significant implications for the Property function by the creation of between 6 and 9 assets being no longer used for their designed function. Preliminary work has already been carried out on the 10 assets which has determined:

- The majority of these sites are within school premises and therefore are likely to require Secretary of State approval for disposal.
- Advice from Planners which details which proposed uses are acceptable without applying for planning permission. The centres currently fall under Use Class F1(a) which is for the provision of education. If the children's centres are to provide medical or health services, then this would fall under use class E and would require change of use planning permission.
- The William Penn and Monksfield Way present the best opportunity for alternative use as they both have their own access and can be easily separated from the adjoining schools.
- Access to Chalvey Grove and Romsey is currently shared with the school but there are opportunities for alternative access.
- Yew Tree Road has potential use as an NHS hub
- One of the main issues with alternative use will be access as most of these centres sit within school grounds or have narrow access.
- In particular, Wexham Road and James Elliman centres fall within the school grounds and separation will be an issue.

6. Background Papers

1. Needs Assessment Summary
2. Children's Centre Review Report
3. Early Education and Childcare Review Report
4. Centre by Centre Implications Summary
5. Equalities Impact Assessment

Needs Assessment

1. Introduction

1.1 This report summarises the outcomes of an assessment of need in relation to Children's Centre provision and the exploration of potential options for developing the model in response to identified drivers for change.

1.2 It concludes that there is both a case for change and an opportunity to develop services in a manner that addresses the two primary drivers of achieving best value and increased effectiveness in meeting the needs of those most in need to support.

1.3 It is informed by statutory guidance which advises Local Authorities and their partners of their duties relating to children's centres under the Childcare Act 2006. These include:

- Section 1: Duty on local authorities to improve the well-being of young children in their area and reduce inequalities between them;
- Section 3: Duty on local authorities to make arrangements to secure that early childhood services in their area are provided in an integrated manner in order to facilitate access and maximise the benefits of those services to young children and their parents: and
- Section 5A: Arrangements to be made by local authorities so that there are sufficient children's centres, so far as reasonably practicable, to meet local need.

1.4 A Children's Centre is defined in the Children Act 2006 as a place or a group of places: which is managed by or on behalf of, or under arrangements with, the local authority with a view to securing that early childhood services in the local authority's area are made available in an integrated way; through which early childhood services are made available (either by providing the services on site, or by providing advice and assistance on gaining access to services elsewhere); and at which activities for young children are provided.

1.5 It also discusses need in relation to the the provision of early learning and childcare given its relationship to the directly delivered provision considered as part of the Children's Centre review work.

1.6 It has been produced within the wider context of work being undertaken across Children's Services to identify opportunities to build on the progress made over recent years in the provision of support for children and families in Slough. Given the role Children's Centre play in enabling children to have the best start in life, consideration has also been given to how they may support the process of strengthening the approach to ensuring, that when needed, children and families receive support early enough to prevent problems developing in the first place and when they do, they are resolved swiftly wherever possible.

1.7 It is informed by the need to ensure that any resultant changes to the current delivery model are in keeping with statutory requirements. Consideration has also been given to the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic on both families, the Children's Centre programme and the wider range of services supporting families.

1.8 The Council and its partners recognise the need to continue to develop ways of working in support of families so that continued improvement in the effectiveness and efficiency of operations may be achieved. This ambition is underpinned by the need to ensure resources are put to best use at a time when the Council has less funding to deliver services.

1.9 Evidence suggests that opportunities are being missed to provide help early enough to avoid poor outcomes. Over the last year, there has been a 30% increase in contacts made to the Children's Social Care 'front door' because of concerns about children and families with a 23% increase in contacts being referred for potential social care intervention. There has been a 10% increase in children in need; 5% increase in the number of children subject to a child protection plan; a 16% increase in the number of looked after children. There is also continuation in the number of poor outcomes for children under 5 and their families which impact on their future lives beyond early years.

1.10 This represents a concerning trend that may get worse given the increasing pressure families are facing because of the cost of living rises they are experiencing. For many, the cost-of-living challenges are impacting families who are already in difficult financial and social circumstances. It also suggests that maintenance of the status quo in terms of approach is not a viable option.

1.11 The case for change process has identified that development of the approach to the provision of Children's Centre services and their contribution to the wider early help offer may be able to drive improvement in preventative outcomes including fewer children and families needing intervention and support at a later stage from statutory services.

1.12 The context for this report includes local consideration of the development of a more targeted approach to Children's Centre services, aligned to the development of a Prevention and Early Help Strategy.

1.13 Slough has 10 Children's Centres operating across the Borough. They deliver a range of family support and development services ranging from early learning and childcare to facilitation of the Healthy Child Programme and the facilitation of health visiting services.

1.14 The following information serves as a summary of the key 'case for change' drivers in relation to how need is currently responded to by the Children's Centre programme and the wider Children's Services system. They may be used to inform any potential modification to the current operating model. They have been identified following detailed consideration of a range of information relating to child and family outcomes, learning in relation to family need and reflections on opportunities and challenges to improving how we work together to provide the most effective and efficient support to families:

- The need to identify ways in which costs may be reduced whilst also maintaining services in accordance with statutory requirements and local need;
- The need to build on the strengths of the current Children's Centre delivered model whilst also addressing identified areas and opportunities for development;
- The need to respond to national and local challenges in relation to pressure on family income and rising costs which are impacting, and will continue to impact on families, particular the most deprived and vulnerable, necessitates new ways of working in response;
- The need to address continued poor child and family outcomes in some areas and the opportunity to develop a renewed preventative approach to effect required change;
- The need to address increased demand on statutory services, minimise the associated human and financial cost, and exploit the opportunity to develop preventative action;
- The opportunity to address identified areas for development in the continuum of support for families;
- The opportunity to address identified areas for development in relation to strengthening our collaborative approach to early help; and
- The opportunity to exploit identified opportunities to maximise enablement of existing community (physical and human) assets, in order to strengthen out collaborative approach to providing support to families in need of early help.

1. Population needs assessment: Informing the need for change

1.1 This paper provides a summary of needs assessment data in order to inform considerations in relation to potential change to the current Children's Centre delivery model and provides the foundations from which options for an alternative to the current operating model have been developed.

1.2 It considers information about the population of Slough, data in relation to outcomes for children, families and young people and associated demographic data.

1.3 Although Children's Centres and early education and childcare provision are primarily concerned with the needs of the 0 – 5 age range, they also related to the needs and issues experienced by the population whole. Given this, information has been collated and considered across a wider age range, as it is important to consider the needs and issues of young people who have transitioned through their early years, into childhood, adolescences, and adulthood in order to understand the bigger picture in terms of overall need. Full needs assessment information across the wider age span is contained within appendix A.

1.4 For the purposes of consideration of the Children's Centre model in particular, in addition to providing an overview, data and analysis has been segmented using the three key elements of the Children's Centre core offer, namely:

- Child development and school readiness
- Parenting capacity and aspirations
- Child and family health and life chances: Child
- Child and family health and life chances: Family

2. Population Needs Assessment

2.1 This section of the report provides a summary of needs assessment data in relation to the needs of children, young people and families. It has been segmented so that specific consideration can be given the needs of children aged 0 – 5 and how the current Children's Centre delivery model responds to them, whilst also offering information on wider family need within the attached appendix.

2.2 A variety of data and information has been obtained from sources ranging from the Berkshire East Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2022 to Children's Social Care demand data. This information has been considered in order to understand Slough demographics and the issues and challenges children, young people and families face in relation to achieving the best possible outcomes. Full details may be found in Appendix 1 to this report.

What we know about children aged 0 - 5 and their families in Slough and what this information tells us about the opportunities and challenges we need to respond to from a Children's Centre perspective

2.3 The following table contains information which serves as a headline summary of the learning arising from 0 – 5 needs assessment analysis together with commentary on potential opportunities and challenges.

Learning	Opportunities and challenges
Overview	
There are a total of 19,873 households with dependent children. This figure is likely to increase when 2021 Census data is published later this year.	The proportionately high number of 0 – 5s in Slough presents opportunities for services to work together to ensure the most efficient use of resources and the delivery of collaborative support when required.
Approximately 12,415 children aged 0-4 live in Slough. This equates to 8.3% of the population, higher than both the South East and England average.	
15% of children aged 0 to 15 in Slough are from income-deprived households and 3% of 0 to 15 year olds live in the most deprived quintile nationally. Deprivation appears more wide-spread across Slough rather than being only in specific neighbourhoods	The levels of deprivation and the associated need to support for families and child across the whole borough presents challenges and opportunities in the provision of targeted, collaborative and creative approaches to identify and reach families who may need support.
Slough is one of the most ethnically diverse Boroughs in England with 54% of the population coming from a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) background.	The level of ethnic diversity in Slough requires services to be responsive to need in a cultural informed manner. Flexibility is also required to ensure provision responds effectively to the diversity of need evident across communities.
73% of children and young people in Slough are from a non-White British background, which is significantly higher than the rest of Berkshire East and England. 86% of school-children in Slough do not have English as a first language. Slough has the 2nd highest proportion of	

births from mothers who were born outside of the UK in England at 69%.	
Learning	Opportunities and challenges
Child development and school readiness	
GLD achievement for children in Slough compares well when considered against South East and England averages.	The relatively good progress made by children in their early years serves as a sound basis for ensuring children fully benefit from the best start in life.
80% of children in Slough who received the 2 to 2 ½ year ASQ-3 development review in 2020/21 were meeting the expected levels in all 5 skill areas. This proportion was significantly lower than the national figure and was the lowest level in Berkshire East.	There is both the opportunity and need to pay focused attention to why developmental progress for some children in Slough is comparatively lower than in other areas so that appropriate intervention and support may be afforded.
There has been an increase of approximately 33% of children accessing early years and childcare with an identified additional need or SEND.	The increase in the number of children with SEND in early years provides an opportunity for services to consider how they collectively respond to increase in demand whilst also presents as a significant challenge to enable need to be met.
Numbers of children attending early years and childcare are steadily increasing following the impact of Covid 19 on provision and attendance.	The increase presents an opportunity for agencies to collectively support children impacted by Covid and to focus on support the continued increase, particularly for the more vulnerable.
Parenting capacity and aspirations	
Slough has significantly worse employment and unemployment rates than England for people aged 16 to 64.	The associated impact on economic well-being may be exacerbated by wider economic challenges. This in turn can impact on child well-being. There is an opportunity to consider this need alongside related challenges and further develop collaborative support.
13% of households in Slough are overcrowded, which is significantly worse than the rest of Berkshire East and England.	As with the comments above, this issue may get worse given wider economic challenges increasing the need for preventative, collaborative support.
The rate of households that are homeless or threatened with homelessness are significantly higher in Slough compared to England.	Issue presents a similar challenge and concern as outlined above.
In 2019, 5,105 (9%) of households in Slough were considered to be fuel poor. In 2019, 5,105 (9%) of households in Slough were considered to be fuel poor.	Again, this issue may well become more prevalent, further highlighting the need for continued development of integrated support for families who may be experiencing a combination of these factors.

Learning	Opportunities and challenges
Child and family health and life chances: Child	
Slough has the 2nd highest infant mortality rate in the South East, although this is similar to the national figure.	<p>These related health needs appear to be entrenched which suggests the need for renewed focus and potentially alternative approaches effecting the required change.</p> <p>There is a clear relationship between these needs and issues and those referred to re: parenting capacity.</p> <p>Consideration of these issues collectively in relation to how families are impacted by a combination of factors presents ongoing opportunities to apply a whole family approach to enabling an improvement in outcomes.</p>
Slough has the highest proportion of babies born with a low-birth weight in the South East and this has increased over the last 5 years.	
In 2018/19, 38% of 5 year olds in Slough had visually obvious dental decay. This was the highest level in the South East and significantly worse than the national figure.	
Slough's prevalence of obesity continues to be worse than national figures and is the highest rate in the South East for both age groups measured through the National Childhood Measurement Programme.	
Slough has lower than average rates of many recommended childhood immunisations, including the Mumps, Measles and Rubella immunisation and the Flu vaccination.	
Child and family health and life chances: Family	
Slough's male life expectancy and healthy life expectancy continue to be significantly worse than national and regional rates.	<p>These range of interrelated issues have a bearing on not only the life chances of the adults in question but also may also impact on the health of children within family units and serve to exacerbate inter-generational problems.</p> <p>As with the comments above, consideration of these issues collectively in relation to how families are impacted by a combination of factors presents ongoing opportunities to apply a whole family approach to enabling an improvement in outcomes.</p>
Female life expectancy is similar to national rates and also higher than males. However, healthy life expectancy is significantly worse than national and regional rates.	
6.5% of Slough mothers were smokers at the time of delivery in 2020/21.	
60% of adults in Slough were overweight or obese in 2019/20, which is approximately 63,400 people.	
Approximately 1.4% of adults in Slough are alcohol dependent. 90% of these were not in treatment in 2020/21.	

2.4 When considered collectively, these key learning points suggest the need to consider how Children's Centres specifically and agencies more broadly might strengthen how they work together to improve a range of related outcomes for families with particular regard to the targeting of support to those most in need.

5. Summary analysis

5.1 When considering the content and associated findings of this report there appears to be a case for change in how services in Children's Service in general, and the Children's Centre programme in particular meets need. The fact that some key outcomes relating to the Children's Centre programme remain poor and an increasing number of children and families require statutory social care intervention are clear indicators of the need to consider doing things differently.

5.2 The 0 – 5 needs assessment data illustrates the fact that a significant number of families are experiences a range of challenges, often inter-connected, that would likely benefit from a renewed, collaborative and targeted approach. This issue is set against a challenging social and economic context that will increase pressure on families, particularly those already experiencing difficulties. The context for providing family support includes a major financial pressures dimension for the Council and its partners to negotiate. These factors are major drivers for change in and of themselves.

5.3 It is also evident that a 'whole systems' approach is required in order to effect the desired change in outcomes. At present, the Children's Centre programme has a tacit association with the wider Children's Service pathway. Analysis suggests that there is value in realignment within a refreshed pathway that looks to strengthen the early help component.

5.4 Ensuring children, particularly those at risk of poor outcomes, have the best start in life is key to them and their communities prospering. This needs assessment data reinforces the need for partners to collectively focus on this element of the life course with access to effective and targeted early childhood services key to achieving aim.

Case for Change: Appendix A**1. Population Need Assessment (0 – 5 perspective)**

1.1 The following information outlines need as it relates to the 0 – 5 age range. Where possible, information is offered that is specific to the 0 – 5 age range. Where this information isn't available, data relating to broader age ranges which includes children aged 0 – 5 has been offered.

1.2 Slough has an overall population of 149,577 with 51% males and 49% females. Slough's population is significantly younger than England's profile with almost a third of people aged under 18. Approximately 12,415 children aged 0-4 live in Slough. This equates to 8.3% of the population, high than both the South East and England average.

Deprivation

1.3 The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) is the official measure of relative deprivation in England and is used to compare levels of deprivation across small areas or neighbourhoods called Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs). The term deprivation encompasses a wide range of factors that will impact on an individual's life, such as income, employment, health, education, housing, access to services and crime.

1.4 Slough's overall deprivation ranking sits within the 5th more deprived decile in England. None of Slough's LSOAs are in the 10% most deprived in the England, however 7 out of Slough's 80 LSOAs fall within the 10%-20% most deprived neighbourhoods nationally. These are in areas of Britwell and Northborough, Central, Chalvey, Colnbrook with Poyle and Elliman wards.

1.5 15% of children aged 0 to 15 in Slough are from income-deprived households and 3% of 0 to 15 year olds live in the most deprived quintile nationally. Deprivation appears more wide-spread across Slough rather than being only in specific neighbourhoods.

Ethnicity

1.6 Slough is one of the most ethnically diverse Boroughs in England with 54% of the population coming from a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) background. A further 11% of the population are from a White non-British background. In comparison, 15% of England's population are from a BAME background and 5% from a White non-British group. People from an Asian background make up 40% of Slough's total population and are the largest ethnic group.

1.7 73% of children and young people in Slough are from a non-White British background, which is significantly higher than the rest of Berkshire East and England. 86% of school-children in Slough do not have English as a first language. Slough has the 2nd highest proportion of births from mothers who were born outside of the UK in England at 69%.

Specific needs and issues

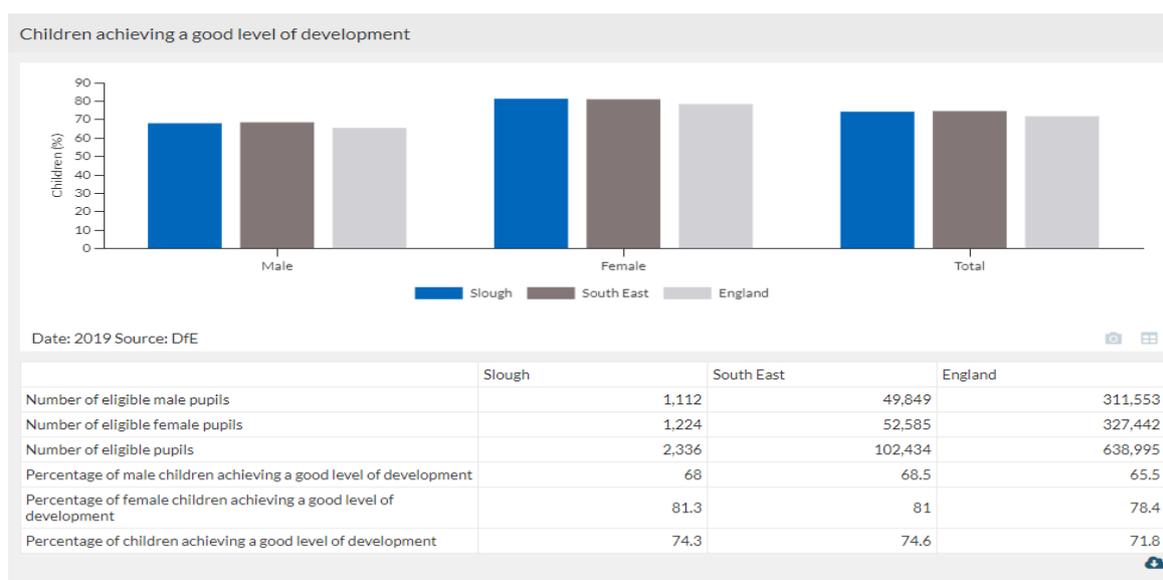
1.8 The following information relates to specific needs and issues affecting children aged 0 - 5 in Slough. They have been framed using the Children’s Centre Core Offer categories:

Child development and school readiness

1.9 The early years foundation stage (EYFS) sets standards for the learning, development and care of your child from birth to 5 years old. Children are defined as having reached a good level of development (GLD) if they achieve at least the expected level in the early learning goals in the prime areas of learning (personal, social and emotional development; physical development; and communication and language) and the early learning goals in the specific areas of mathematics and literacy.

1.10 The following information provides details in relation to EYFS outcomes for children in Slough.

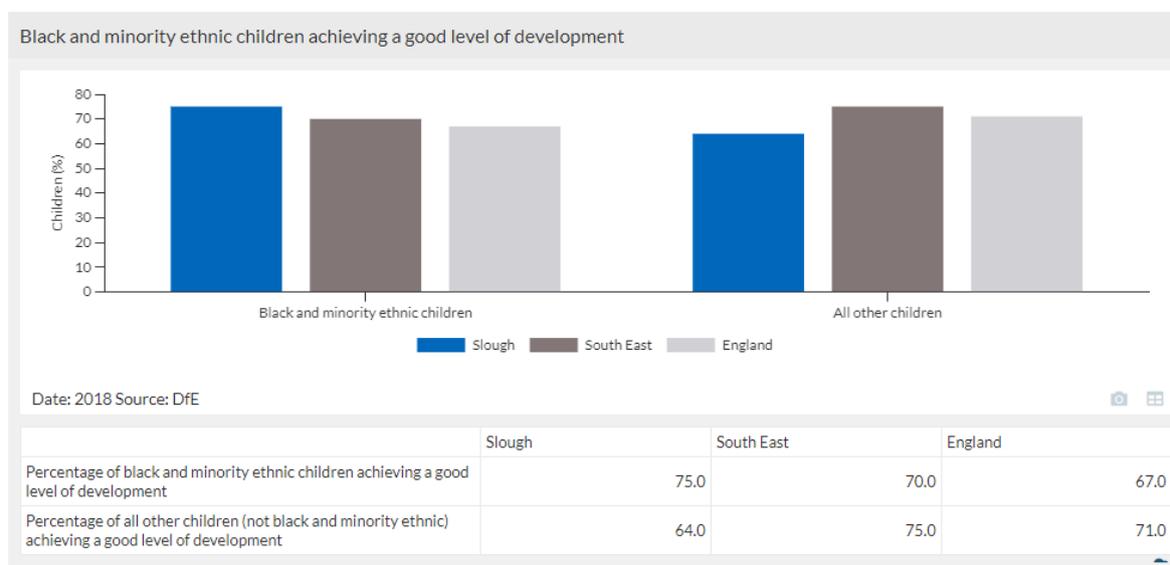
1.11 The information below illustrates that GLD achievement for children in Slough compares well when considered against South East and England averages.



1.12 The following chart outlines GLD outcomes for children eligible for free school meals. Outcomes in this category also compare well against South East and England averages.



1.13 The table below illustrates outcomes for children from black and minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds. It shows that children from BAME backgrounds achieve relatively well when compared South East and England average.



1.14 There has been an increase of approximately 33% of children accessing early years and childcare with an identified additional need or SEND.

1.15 Numbers of children attending early years and childcare are steadily increasing following the impact of Covid 19 on provision and attendance.

Parenting aspirations

1.16 According to 2011 census data, there are a total of 19,873 households with dependent children. This figure is likely to increase when 2021 Census data is published later this year.

1.17 A significant number of these households will include children age 0 – 5. The following information summaries needs and issues in relation to the adult population who either are or may become parents to children aged 0 – 5. They related to circumstances which may have a bearing on parenting aspirations.

1.18 From Jul-20 to Jun-21, 68% of Slough's working age population were in employment. The proportion of people in employment decreased during the pandemic and this drop has been more pronounced in Slough. Slough has significantly worse employment and unemployment rates than England for people aged 16 to 64.

1.19 13% of households in Slough are overcrowded, which is significantly worse than the rest of Berkshire East and England. The rate of households that are homeless or threatened with homelessness are significantly higher in Slough compared to England. This is the case for households with dependent children and also those headed by a young person (aged 16 to 24).

1.20 A household is considered to be fuel poor if they are living in a property with an energy efficiency rating of band D or below and are left with a residual income below the official poverty line once they have spent the required amount to heat their home. Evidence shows that living in cold homes is associated with poor health outcomes and an increased risk of morbidity and mortality for all age groups. In 2019, 5,105 (9%) of households in Slough were considered to be fuel poor.

Child and family health and life chances: Child

1.21 Slough has the 2nd highest infant mortality rate in the South East, although this is similar to the national figure. Infant mortality is a key indicator of the general health of the entire population. In 2018-20, 29 babies under 1 died in Slough at a rate of 4 per 1,000 population. In 2017-19, 16 children aged 1 to 17 died in Slough at a rate of 13 per 100,000 population.

1.22 Low birth weight. Slough has the highest proportion of babies born with a low-birth weight in the South East and this has increased over the last 5 years. Infant mortality.

1.23 In 2018/19, 38% of 5 year olds in Slough had visually obvious dental decay. This was the highest level in the South East and significantly worse than the national figure.

1.24 3.9% of term babies born in Slough were a low birth weight (under 2,500g) in 2019. This is significantly higher than the England average.

1.25 Childhood obesity is increasing nationally. Slough's prevalence of obesity continues to be worse than national figures and is the highest rate in the South East for both age groups measured through the National Childhood Measurement Programme.

1.26 Data from 2015/16 to 19/20 shows an association between deprivation and obesity in Slough, particularly for the Reception aged group. The difference in

obesity prevalence between ethnic groups is not as great in Slough compared to the rest of Berkshire East.

1.27 Slough has lower than average rates of many recommended childhood immunisations, including the Mumps, Measles and Rubella immunisation and the Flu vaccination.

Family

1.28 Slough's male life expectancy and healthy life expectancy continue to be significantly worse than national and regional rates. Boys born in Slough today can expect to live to 78 with the last 20 years of life not being in good health.

1.29 Slough's female life expectancy is similar to national rates and also higher than males. However, healthy life expectancy is significantly worse than national and regional rates. Girls born in Slough today can expect to live to 82 with the last 23 years of life not being in good health.

1.30 There is also a 5.3 year difference in life expectancy between boys born in the least deprived areas and most deprived areas of Slough

1.31 There is also a 5.8 year difference in life expectancy between girls born in the least deprived areas of Slough and most deprived areas.

1.32 6.5% of Slough mothers were smokers at the time of delivery in 2020/21.

1.33 60% of adults in Slough were overweight or obese in 2019/20, which is approximately 63,400 people.

1.34 Approximately 1.4% of adults in Slough are alcohol dependent. 90% of these were not in treatment in 2020/21.

1.35 38% (49) of Slough adults in treatment for alcohol misuse successfully completed treatment in 2019. 4% (16) of opiate users and 30% (31) of non-opiate users also successfully complete treatment in 2019. These completion rates have also got worse over the last 5 years.

Children and Young People's Vulnerability

1.36 19.5% of Slough's under 16s lived in relatively low-income families in 2019/20. This is over 7,700 children and continues to increase.

Sources:

Local Insight Profile 2021

Health Joint Needs Assessment 2022

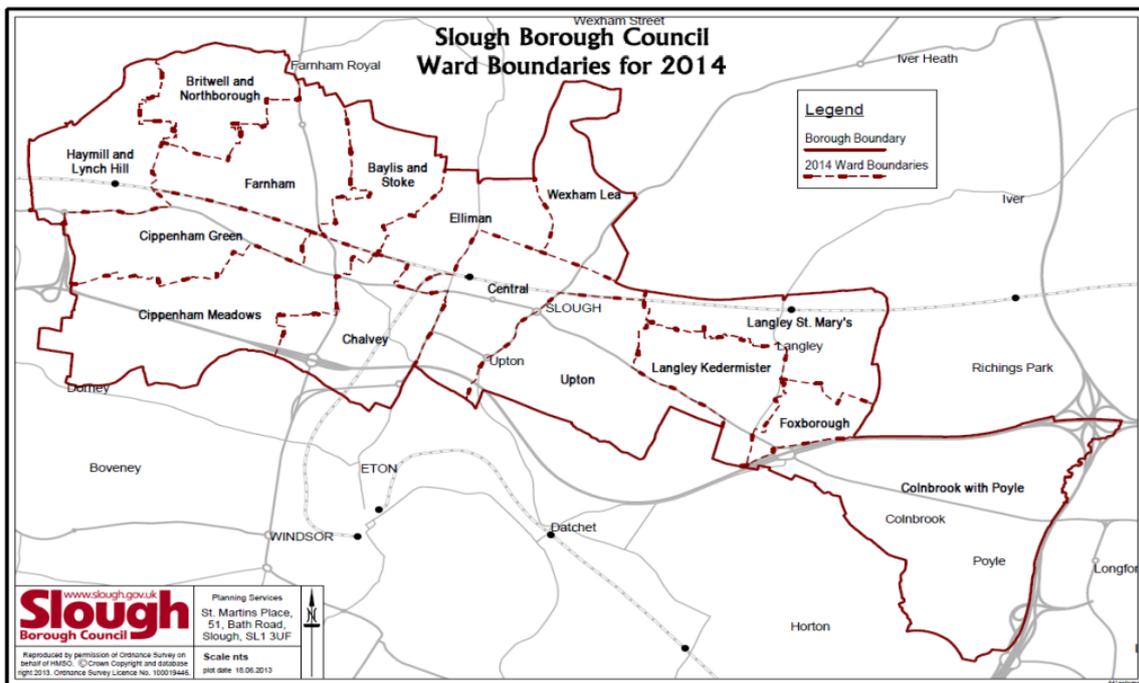
Slough Borough Council Ward Data Summaries 2021

2. Population perspective (0 – 25)

Overview

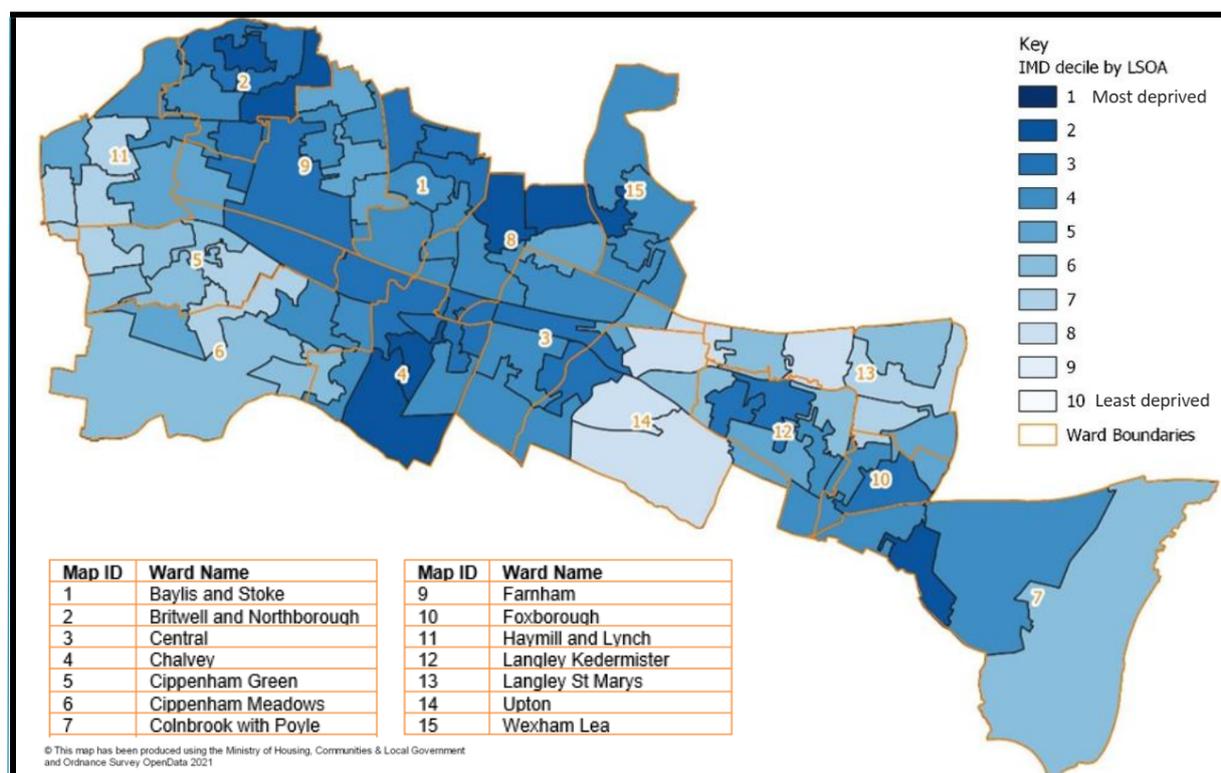
2.1 Slough has a population of 149,577 with 51% males and 49% females. Slough’s population is significantly younger than England’s profile with almost a third of people aged under 18. Approximately 43,650 children and young people (aged under 18) live in Slough. This is 29% of Slough’s total population, which is the 2nd highest proportion in England. The proportion of Slough’s population from the 0 to 14 age group is significantly higher than the rest of Berkshire East and the national picture. The borough also includes a higher proportion of young adults aged 25-44, suggesting a large number of young families are resident.

2.2 Slough is made up of 14 wards. It is bisected by the A4 (connecting Bath to London) and the Great Western Main line. It covers an area of 32.54 km² and is approx. 20 miles west of central London.



Deprivation

2.3 The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) is the official measure of relative deprivation in England and is used to compare levels of deprivation across small areas or neighbourhoods called Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs). The term deprivation encompasses a wide range of factors that will impact on an individual’s life, such as income, employment, health, education, housing, access to services and crime.



2.4 Slough’s overall deprivation ranking sits within the 5th more deprived decile in England. None of Slough’s LSOAs are in the 10% most deprived in the England, however 7 out of Slough’s 80 LSOAs fall within the 10%-20% most deprived neighbourhoods nationally. These are in areas of Britwell and Northborough, Central, Chalvey, Colnbrook with Poyle and Elliman wards.

2.5 15% of children aged 0 to 15 in Slough are from income-deprived households and 3% of 0 to 15 year olds live in the most deprived quintile nationally. Deprivation is more wide-spread across Slough rather than being in specific neighbourhoods.

Ethnicity

2.6 Slough is one of the most ethnically diverse Boroughs in England with 54% of the population coming from a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) background. A further 11% of the population are from a White non-British background. In comparison, 15% of England’s population are from a BAME background and 5% from a White non-British group. People from an Asian background make up 40% of Slough’s total population and are the largest ethnic group.

2.7 73% of children and young people in Slough are from a non-White British background, which is significantly higher than the rest of Berkshire East and England. 86% of school-children in Slough do not have English as a first language. Slough has the 2nd highest proportion of births from mothers who were born outside of the UK in England at 69%.

Economic wellbeing

2.8 From Jul-20 to Jun-21, 68% of Slough's working age population were in employment. The proportion of people in employment decreased during the pandemic and this drop has been more pronounced in Slough. Slough has significantly worse employment and unemployment rates than England for people aged 16 to 64.

Housing

2.9 There are 55,280 residential properties in Slough, primarily made up of flats or maisonettes (35%) and terraced houses (34%). The number of properties in Slough is projected to increase to 57,504 by 2030 and to 59,262 by 2040.

2.10 All property types in Slough are more expensive than the England average and are also higher than the South East average for semidetached and terraced houses. The proportion of people who own their house in Slough is lower than England and the South East region with a higher proportion of people renting, both social renting and private.

2.11 13% of households in Slough are overcrowded, which is significantly worse than the rest of Berkshire East and England. The rate of households that are homeless or threatened with homelessness are significantly higher in Slough compared to England. This is the case for households with dependent children and also those headed by a young person (aged 16 to 24).

2.12 A household is considered to be fuel poor if they are living in a property with an energy efficiency rating of band D or below and are left with a residual income below the official poverty line once they have spent the required amount to heat their home. Evidence shows that living in cold homes is associated with poor health outcomes and an increased risk of morbidity and mortality for all age groups. In 2019, 5,105 (9%) of households in Slough were considered to be fuel poor.

Health

2.13 Infant mortality is a key indicator of the general health of the entire population. In 2018-20, 29 babies under 1 died in Slough at a rate of 4 per 1,000 population. In 2017-19, 16 children aged 1 to 17 died in Slough at a rate of 13 per 100,000 population.

2.14 Slough's male life expectancy and healthy life expectancy continue to be significantly worse than national and regional rates. Boys born in Slough today can expect to live to 78 with the last 20 years of life not being in good health.

2.15 Slough's female life expectancy is similar to national rates and also higher than males. However, healthy life expectancy is significantly worse than national and regional rates. Girls born in Slough today can expect to live to 82 with the last 23 years of life not being in good health.

2.16 There is also a 5.3 year difference in life expectancy between boys born in the least deprived areas and most deprived areas of Slough

2.17 There is also a 5.8 year difference in life expectancy between girls born in the least deprived areas of Slough and most deprived areas.

2.18 Low birth weight. Slough has the highest proportion of babies born with a low-birth weight in the South East and this has increased over the last 5 years. Infant mortality. Slough has the 2nd highest infant mortality rate in the South East, although this is similar to the national figure.

2.19 In 2018/19, 38% of 5 year olds in Slough had visually obvious dental decay. This was the highest level in the South East and significantly worse than the national figure.

2.20 Data from 2015/16 to 19/20 shows an association between deprivation and obesity in Slough, particularly for the Reception aged group. The difference in obesity prevalence between ethnic groups is not as great in Slough compared to the rest of Berkshire East.

2.21 Reception children and Year 6 children from a Black ethnic group do have higher prevalence than those in White and Asian groups, however this is not significantly different.

2.22 6.5% of Slough mothers were smokers at the time of delivery in 2020/21.

2.23 3.9% of term babies born in Slough were a low birth weight (under 2,500g) in 2019. This is significantly higher than the England average.

2.24 Childhood obesity is increasing nationally. Slough's prevalence of obesity continues to be worse than national figures and is the highest rate in the South East for both age groups measured through the National Childhood Measurement Programme.

2.25 60% of adults in Slough were overweight or obese in 2019/20, which is approximately 63,400 people.

2.26 Slough has lower than average rates of many recommended childhood immunisations, including the Mumps, Measles and Rubella immunisation and the Flu vaccination.

2.27 Approximately 1.4% of adults in Slough are alcohol dependent. 90% of these were not in treatment in 2020/21.

2.28 38% (49) of Slough adults in treatment for alcohol misuse successfully completed treatment in 2019. 4% (16) of opiate users and 30% (31) of non-opiate users also successfully complete treatment in 2019. These completion rates have also got worse over the last 5 years.

Emotional Health and Well-being

2.29 On 31-Mar-21, 1,680 People in Slough were recorded as having a serious mental health disorder on their GP Record and 10,719 were recorded as having depression.

2.30 Suicide is a significant cause of death in young adults and can be an indicator of underlying rates of mental ill-health. From 2018 to 2020 there were 32 suicides recorded for Slough residents at a rate of 9 per 100,000 population. The suicide rate in males is higher, both nationally and regionally. In 2018-20 81% of suicides in Slough were male.

2.31 Hospital admissions for self-harm in children have increased in recent years with admissions for young women being much higher than admissions for young men.

2.32 On average, people with Severe Mental Illness (SMI) die 15 to 20 years earlier than the general population and have a 3.7 times higher death rate in people aged under 75.

2.33 In 2018-20, Slough's premature mortality rate for people with SMI was significantly worse than England's at 123.1 per 100,000 population. The under-75 mortality rate was 376% higher than the general population in Slough for this time period, which was similar to England.

Education

2.34 Slough's school readiness and attainment levels are significantly better than England's and continue to increase. This is also true for children eligible for free school meals.

2.35 Attainment 8 Scores (Key Stage 4) in Slough's state-funded schools continue to be significantly better than England's.

Children and Young People's Vulnerability

2.36 19.5% of Slough's under 16s lived in relatively low-income families in 2019/20. This is over 7,700 children and continues to increase.

2.37 195 children in Slough were in care on 31-Mar-20. This is a rate of 45 per 10,000 population.

2.38 Slough has the highest rate of children in need and children on a protection plan in Berkshire East. These rates are also significantly higher than England's.

2.39 13.5% (4,558) of pupils in Slough schools were identified as SEN in January 2021. 3.6% had an EHC and 9.9% received SEN support.

2.40 7.8% (356) of all children with SEN are in special schools within the Borough.

2.41 Children and young people at risk of offending or within the youth justice system often have more unmet health needs than other children and public health services have an important role to play in tackling violence to help focus on interventions that are effective and target prevention and treatment.

2.42 There has been an increase of approximately 33% of children accessing early years and childcare with an identified additional need or SEND.

- 2.43 94.4% participation level for 16-17 year olds.
- 2.44 There has been a 30% increase in front door contacts Feb 2021 to Feb 2022.
- 2.45 There has been a 23% increase in contact to CSC referral Feb 2021 to Feb 2022.
- 2.46 There has been consistent performance (circa 60%) closure of early help cases where significant and sustained progress has been achieved via Early Help Feb 2021 to Feb 2022.
- 2.47 There has been an 11% increase in children subject to a CIN plan Feb 2021 to Feb 2022.
- 2.48 There has been a 5% increase in children subject to a child protection plan Feb 2021 to Feb 2022
- 2.49 The number of Children Looked After (CLA) has increased by 16% Feb 2021 to Feb 2022.
- 2.50 The 5 most prevalent parental factors affecting children split by the case type Feb 2021 to Feb 2022 (open cases, CP, CLA) continue to be:
- Known History of Domestic Violence (Victim)
 - Illness – Mental
 - Problem Drug Abuse
 - Known History of Domestic Violence (Perpetrator)
 - Problem Drinking Abuse
- 2.51 Modelled estimates indicate that the rate of children and young people from Slough who living in households where domestic violence and abuse, parental substance misuse or parental mental health issues are affecting an adult in the household are higher than the rest of Berkshire East
- 2.52 91 children (aged 10 to 17) were in the youth justice system in Slough at a rate of 5.2 per 1,000 population (2019/20).
- 2.53 40 children (aged 10 to 17) were first time offenders in Slough at a rate of **229** per 100,000 population (2020).
- 2.54 In 2020/21, there were 5,772 violent offences recorded in Slough at a rate of 39 per 1,000 population. 392 of these were sexual offences at a rate of 2.6 per 1,000. Slough's rates for both violent and violent sexual offences are significantly higher than England's.

Sources:

Local Insight Profile 2021

Health Joint Needs Assessment 2022

Slough Borough Council Ward Data Summaries 2021

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Children's Centre Remodelling

Children's Centre Review

Executive Summary

1.1 Work has been progressed over the past year to explore the feasibility of modifying existing arrangements for the provision of Children's Centres.

1.2 This paper details the work undertaken, outlines findings and offers a view on the potential development of a new way of working in order to address identified drivers for change.

Summary of learning outcomes

1.3 The following information serves as a summary of the learning arising from review work undertaken with particular regard to current arrangements for enabling the provision and coordination of early childhood services.

Capacity to provide key functions diminished overtime

1.4 Organisation change and associated reduction and / or redeployment of resource has had a bearing on the current model being able to maintain key functions traditionally undertaken by Children's Centres to meet need, particular for those most in need of support. Notwithstanding the impact of the Covid pandemic, the relatively low levels of ongoing participation in the service suggests that the service has difficulty in developing and coordinating the wider offer of early childhood services across the borough.

1.5 Managers and staff have been effective in creatively using available resources in order sustain provision, pre and post Pandemic, however renewed consideration should be given as to how best to deliver against identified need and Children's Centre core requirements. Key functions relating to outreach and family support are being discharged elsewhere in the partnership via voluntary sector organisations who deliver related work and in Targeted Early Help for example. Consideration should therefore be given to consolidating current resources so that they may focus on directly attending to core children's centre specific functions in collaboration with other related services. This renewed focus should include the targeting of families most in need of support.

The model has evolved to be primarily concerned with the provision of early education and childcare

1.6 The direct provision of early education and childcare is central to the current model. It provides this service across 8 of the current 10 Children's Centres, with most service staff employed to deliver childcare. Whilst this provides a valued service, specific analysis undertaken in relation to the provision of early education and childcare suggests that much of this provision may not be critical from a childcare sufficiency perspective. The Council is not statutorily required to directly deliver early education and childcare although it is required to ensure, as far as is reasonable, that sufficient provision is in place. Given this, consideration should be

given to the potential for reducing direct delivery of early education and childcare and where necessary, working with the private, voluntary and independent sector to address any gaps in the provider market. This may enable the release of resources to deploy for Children's Centre specific functions.

Core functions and offer maintained but spread thinly and unevenly across the range of centres and associated localities

1.7 Give ongoing resource challenges experienced by partners in general and the Council in particular, coupled with the impact of the Covid pandemic, Children's Centres have creatively maintained services across the majority of centres. Analysis of the offer suggests that there would be value in considering how best to provide Children's Centre functions and programmes so that they have maximum impact on those who most need support. These considerations should include options for consolidation of the model so that it may enable the focusing of work on those most in need, whilst aligning it to the wider range of assets across children's services and partners.

Capacity to identify and target those most in need of support is limited

1.8 Current arrangements, which include a primary focus on early education and childcare, do not enable the service to carry out the necessary work to systematically assess need, identify those most in need of targeted support and coordinate early childhood services in response. There is a strong relationship between the need to exercise this function and related work that is undertaken by Targeted Early Help, particularly the development of an Early Help Strategy and the delivery of the Strengthening Families programme. Consideration therefore should be given to revising arrangements to enable these functions to be fulfilled in collaboration with related services and partners via the family network and hub developments referenced within the SCF Business Plan.

1.9 In light of this learning, the case for change can be summarised as follows:

- The need to consolidate limited resources to enable Children's Centre functions to be renewed;
- The need to enable key children's centre functions to be fulfilled and focused on core Children's Centre requirements;
- The recognition that resources and associated approach needs to enable and ensure the coordination and targeting of early childhood services at the most vulnerable;

1.10 As a consequence, consideration should therefore be given to:

- Options for the reduce in the current number of centres to consolidate offer and enable increase in identification and targeting of support for those most in need. This need is informed by aim of securing best value for the provision of the services in question and responding to the identified case for change to current arrangements outlined in this report; and

- Align a revised model to early help strategy development in general and the associated development of family networks in particular.

1.11 Options developed will require consultation with residents and stakeholders to secure views and opinions on any considered change. This consultation should be inclusive of partners and stakeholders to obtain a rounded view of options including alternatives to the ones outlined. Once consultation is undertaken, options may be modified and recommendations for change finalised based on its outcome. During this process, due consideration also needs to be given to how best to use existing and associated community assets to enable core early childhood services to be delivered by partners and the service itself to be maintained. This work would also include engagement with stakeholders to develop a phased, transition plan to enable any agreed changes to be implemented.

Alternative operating model

1.12 Consideration should be given to a revised model which provides renewed focus on the core functions of Children's Centre coordination, outreach and family support. The creation of dedicated resource to undertake these functions could enable a refreshed approach to identifying need in collaboration with partners and developing and coordinating a refreshed offer of early childhood services. It would also enable the creation of a revised model that can contribute to the future development of a family network model.

1.13 Conceptually, Children's Centres are a vehicle for enabling a partnership approach to the provision of early childhood services to meet need. An alternative operating model to the current one in Slough could be developed by renewing the approach to leading and coordinating early childhood services in collaboration with schools, health providers, social care and the voluntary and community sector. It could do so by reshaping its model in order to re-establish and re-focus coordination, outreach and family support capacity to lead and coordinate associated functions across partner agencies.

1.14 Instead of an approach, predicated on the sole use of existing Centre buildings, the model would seek to develop a more flexible and dynamic offer by identifying and utilising community assets in collaboration with associated services and partners. Key aspects include:

- An approach centred on the coordination of early childhood services in collaboration with partners;
- A way of working that isn't reliant on the use of existing premises to enable the development and delivery of the early childhood services offer;
- The establishing of dedicated Children's Centre resource to attend to the key functions of coordination, outreach and family support; and
- Using this resource to connect with related functions across the partnership to achieve the aim of children's centre making available universal and targeted early childhood services and supporting child and family access to them.

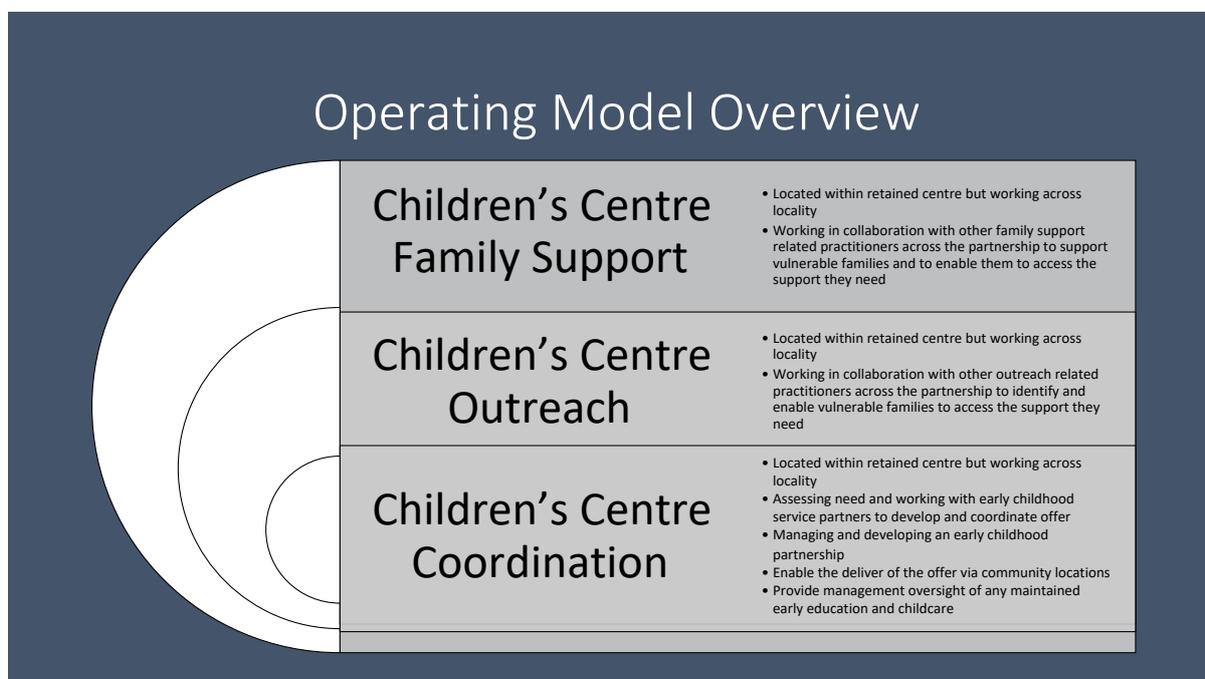
1.15 Consideration should be given to a ‘three centre’ model because it would enable the proposed new way of working to be introduced and embedded, whilst also allowing for alignment with existing locality-based approaches applied by SBC and its partners. Alignment with current community services locations to create a locality-based model provides a logical framework within which a new way of working could be developed.

1.16 Consideration should also be given to aligning and integrating remodelled centres with maintained, directly delivered childcare in order to maximise use of premises. Analysis suggests that the Centres at Chalvey Grove and Romsey Close may best placed to meet this dual function as indicated in the preferred option for change with Penn Road acting as the Children’s Centre reference point in the north of the Borough.

1.17 The model would maintain usage of, and operate from retained Centre/s for use as the base from which to assess and map need for early childhood services across the borough in collaboration with partners. These bases can provide the footprint for the wider family network model currently under development.

1.18 Premises may also be used to continue to house critical joint partnership, early childhood service operations within but would become the principal operations hub for a boroughwide network of early childhood services. The model would align to the development of the Early Help Strategy and associated work regarding a family network approach to delivering coordinated preventative early help to families.

1.19 Figure below illustrates a draft outline operating model for a revised Children’s Centre delivery model.



1.20 If approval is given to consult on options for change to current arrangement, key partners will be engaged as part of the consultation process in order to aid the process of determining how best a revised operating model might be created and implemented.

Children's Centre Remodelling

Children's Centre Review

Purpose of paper

To summarise review analysis and findings in relation to the provision of Children's Centres by Slough Borough Council (SBC).

1. Background and context

1.1 Work has been progressed over the past year to explore the feasibility of modifying existing arrangements for the provision of Children's Centres. Key drivers for this work include improving preventative work across the partnership and where feasible, enabling SBC to deliver financial savings as part of its budget setting process and medium-term financial strategy.

1.2 SBC has 10 Children's Centres across the Borough (***location map can be found in Appendix 1***). Each centre includes the provision of directly delivered early education and childcare. This provision has been subject to associated review work, the outcomes of which will inform options for change arising from both reviews.

1.3 Legislation in relation to Children's Centres is contained in The Childcare Act 2006, and underpinned by Sure Start Children's Centres Statutory Guidance, which defines a Children's Centre a place or a group of places: which is managed by or on behalf of, or under arrangements with, the local authority with a view to securing that early childhood services in the local authority's area are made available in an integrated way; through which early childhood services are made available (either by providing the services on site, or by providing advice and assistance on gaining access to services elsewhere); and, at which activities for young children are provided.

1.4 The Statutory Guidance states that "Centres are as much about making appropriate and integrated services available, as about providing premises in particular geographical areas. A Children's Centre should make available universal and targeted early childhood services either by providing the services at the centre itself or by providing advice and assistance to parents (mothers and fathers) and prospective parents in accessing services provided elsewhere". The guidance defines the core purpose as being to improve outcomes for young children and their families and reduce inequalities between families in greatest need and their peers in:

- child development and school readiness;
- parenting aspirations and parenting skills; and,
- child and family health and life chances.

2. Review objectives

2.1 To consider the current Children's Centre model in relation to its ability deliver against the core requirement of providing and coordinate early childhood services.

2.2 Informed by the outcomes of these considerations, identify options for change that respond to key findings within the wider context the service operates in.

3. Review methodology and intended outcomes

3.1 In order assess the relative merits and constraints of the current Children's Centre offer and identify options for change, the following methodology has been applied:

3.1.1 History and context: Consideration of the background and context to current arrangements.

- Intended outcome: The shaping of options for change are informed by a clear understanding of how the Children's Centre programme has evolved since its inception.

3.1.2 Understanding need: Consideration of the needs of children aged 0-5 and their families.

- Intended outcome: Analysis and options for change are informed by the related needs and issues experienced by children and families in Slough.

3.1.3 Understanding the current offer and its effectiveness: Consideration of how the Children's Centre programme secures outcomes for children and families.

- Intended outcome: Analysis and options for change are informed by the strengths and areas for development in the current offer.

3.1.4 Access to services by children and families: Consideration of who the programme is engaging and how access is enabled.

- Intended outcome: Analysis and options for change are informed by an understanding of how families are accessing and benefiting from current arrangements.

3.1.5 The quality of impact and practice: Consideration of the difference current arrangements are making to families.

- Intended outcome: Analysis and options for change are informed by a clear understanding of the impact current practice is having on child and family outcomes.

3.1.6 Leadership, governance and management: Consideration of how the Children's Centre programme is being strategically lead and operationally managed.

- Intended outcome: Analysis and options for change are informed an understanding of current leadership and management arrangements.

3.1.7 Resources: The level and nature of resources available to the programme including premises.

- Intended outcome: Analysis and options for change are informed by an understanding of how the service is currently resourced.

3.1.8 Determining the case and options for change: capturing the learning from review activity to determine what may need to change and why.

- Intended outcome: Options for change are shaped, informed by key drivers and learning from the strengthens and areas for development regarding current arrangements.

3.2 This work has been undertaken within the context of the financial and wider policy backdrop of SBC in general and children and family services in particular. It aims to generate options for consultation that are informed by the aim of securing best value in the services provided, whilst also ensuring continues focus is given to securing services that improve outcomes for young children and their families, with a particular regard to those in greatest need of support.

4. History and context

4.1 The 10 SBC Children's Centres were set up over a seven-year period from 2004 to 2011. All are on primary or nursery school sites, with one exception (Vicarage Way) and this Centre is within close walking distance of a primary school. All sites provide early learning services as well as family services.

4.2 From the outset, the Centres were set up as a group with a central management team reporting to a Head of Service. From September 2013, the 10 Centres within the group have been organised within four geographical networks to ensure effective planning of services and allocation of resources. The local teams comprise:

- Family Learning and Targeted Family Services staff (under the central management of a Senior Coordinator Family Services and a Senior Coordinator Family Learning), and
- Early Years staff under the management of one Early Years Manager per network, supported by a Deputy Early Years Manager on each site. The senior coordinator takes responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the Centres.

4.3 The early years provision is a central component of the Children's Centre approach in Slough and is one of the ways in which the Centres have been able to engage parents and children from priority groups in a wide range of other services to meet their needs. The integration of the early years provision and family services was designed to ensure that any services provided, whether to children or parents, led to improved outcomes for the children and not just for the adults. In addition, through this provision, particularly the funded 2-year-old and referred places, the Centres have played a key role in maintaining regular contact with vulnerable children.

4.4 The integration of early years and family services has located Children's Centres alongside other related council services. The approach has been focussing on working with parents, early years practitioners and partner agencies to support the development of young children and to help them build the resilience needed to become successful adults. This is reflected in the Local Authority's vision for Early Years, which is:

To work with parents, early years practitioners and partner agencies to support the development of all young children, including the most vulnerable, and to help them build the skills and resilience needed to become successful adults, with the capability and willingness to make a positive contribution to society'.

4.5 Organisation changes overtime has resulted in resources originally assigned to the Children's Centre model being reduced and or redeployed, including family support capacity. This has resulted in the programme's resources being much more focused on the provision of early education and childcare, whilst enabling early childhood services and related family support services to be delivered from Children's Centre locations.

5. Understanding need: What we know about children aged 0 - 5 and their families in Slough

5.1 The following table contains information which serves as a headline summary of the learning arising from 0 – 5 needs assessment analysis. The data is framed by Children's Centre 'core purpose' headings.

Needs assessment summary
<p>Overview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are a total of 19,873 households with dependent children in Slough. This figure is likely to increase when 2021 Census data is published later this year. • Approximately 12,415 children aged 0-4 live in Slough. This equates to 8.3% of the population, higher than both the South East and England average. • 15% of children aged 0 to 15 in Slough are from income-deprived households and 3% of 0 to 15 year olds live in the most deprived quintile nationally. • Slough is one of the most ethnically diverse Boroughs in England with 54% of the population coming from a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) background. • 73% of children and young people in Slough are from a non-White British background, which is significantly higher than the rest of Berkshire East and England. 86% of school children in Slough do not have English as a first language. Slough has the 2nd highest proportion of births from mothers who were born outside of the UK in England at 69%.

Child development and school readiness

- Good learning and development (GLD) achievement for children in Slough compares well when considered against South East and England averages.
- 80% of children in Slough who received the 2 to 2 ½ year ASQ-3 development review in 2020/21 were meeting the expected levels in all 5 skill areas. This proportion was significantly lower than the national figure and was the lowest level in Berkshire East.
- There has been an increase of approximately 33% of children accessing early years and childcare with an identified additional need or SEND.
- Numbers of children attending early years and childcare are steadily increasing following the impact of Covid 19 on provision and attendance.

Parenting capacity and aspirations

- Slough has significantly worse employment and unemployment rates than England for people aged 16 to 64.
- 13% of households in Slough are overcrowded, which is significantly worse than the rest of Berkshire East and England.
- The rate of households that are homeless or threatened with homelessness are significantly higher in Slough compared to England.
- In 2019, 5,105 (9%) of households in Slough were considered to be fuel poor. In 2019, 5,105 (9%) of households in Slough were considered to be fuel poor.

Child and family health and life chances: Child

- Slough has the 2nd highest infant mortality rate in the South East, although this is similar to the national figure.
- Slough has the highest proportion of babies born with a low-birth weight in the South East and this has increased over the last 5 years.
- In 2018/19, 38% of 5 year olds in Slough had visually obvious dental decay. This was the highest level in the South East and significantly worse than the national figure.
- Slough's prevalence of obesity continues to be worse than national figures and is the highest rate in the South East for both age groups measured through the National Childhood Measurement Programme.
- Slough has lower than average rates of many recommended childhood immunisations, including the Mumps, Measles and Rubella immunisation and the Flu vaccination.

Child and family health and life chances: Family
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slough's male life expectancy and healthy life expectancy continue to be significantly worse than national and regional rates. • Female life expectancy is similar to national rates and also higher than males. However, healthy life expectancy is significantly worse than national and regional rates. • 6.5% of Slough mothers were smokers at the time of delivery in 2020/21. • 60% of adults in Slough were overweight or obese in 2019/20, which is approximately 63,400 people.

5.2 Needs assessment data indicates that many families experience prevailing challenges in relation to social and health outcomes in Slough. It can be assumed that these may well be compounded given wider social and economic pressures.

5.3 Slough's referral rates per 10,000 into children's social care are higher than the average of statistical neighbours benchmarked against as is the rate of children known to social care services. This serves an indication of the need to think differently about how preventative work can limited the need for statutory engagement.

5.4 The number of Child Protection Plans (CPP) in Slough are relatively high with new starters of a child protection plan well above the average of statistical neighbours. Similarly, the number of children requiring statutory intervention to protect them from harm serves as a further indication of the need to consider how to strengthen prevention and early help to avoid this outcome. Consideration of the role a remodelled Children's Centre model could play in achieving the change required is key to supporting families most in need of support so difficulties don't escalate.

5.5 This needs assessment information suggests the need for revised consideration as to how partners and service in general and the Children's Centre programme in particular, are working together to support those most in need. All services across the partnership are working within a challenging financial context. There is therefore a need to ensure pressured resources are used collaboratively and effectively deployed to improve jointly prioritised outcomes.

5.6 This needs assessment consideration sits alongside associated work carried out in the development of the Slough Children First (SCF) Business Plan. This work has led to the development of a plan that aims to create a strengthened whole systems approach to meeting the needs of children and families in a way that enhances collaborative, preventative work.

5.7 There is an opportunity to remodel the current children's centre model, so it plays a renewed role in this integrated plan as part of the family network model, becoming the 0 – 5 early childhood component of the proposed business plan approach to developing a whole system approach to prevention, early help and child and family support.

6. Understanding the current offer and its effectiveness

6.1 The Children's Centre programme seeks to address need by delivering and enabling a range of services including:

- Health visitor clinics, new birth visits, 12-month reviews, 2-year development checks;
- Contact visits;
- Facilitation of domestic Abuse counselling and access to the Freedom programme;
- Speech and Language therapy sessions for children with delayed speech;
- Facilitation of Children's Social Care Core group meetings and Case conferences;
- Provision of breast feeding support;
- Universal little learner groups (stay and play groups);
- Targeted groups in parenting support and employment advice;
- Support for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND);
- Facilitation of adult education and community learning;
- Foodbank provision;
- Healthy Start vouchers;
- Sensory Consortium activity
- Neo natal appointments;
- Healthy pregnancy workshops; and
- Facilitation of debt and money management drop in's

6.2 All 10 centres provide funded early years entitlement for 2, 3 and 4 year olds and day-care services for working parents as a central part of their offer.

6.3 Each centre provides a programme of activity which varies from centre to centre. The current programme may be found as '**Autumn Programme 2022' appendix 2 to this report**. Programme content is almost exclusively delivered by partners with the exception of the early education and childcare offer. Partner usage of respective centres is summarised in '**Children's Centre Provision and Participation Summary' attached as appendix 3 to this report**.

6.4 Over 11,000 family members are currently registered with the programme with a range of partners including Midwifery and Public Health working together to provide families with children 0-5 with the support they need in accordance with Core Offer requirements.

6.5 There are 2 cohorts of service users, families accessing early education and childcare provision which currently has a total of 347 children registered and families accessing the wider offer. There were 1,454 attendances for the wider programme as of October 2022.

6.6 Participation in the service has declined significantly since the Covid pandemic from an attendance level of 18,176 in 2019 – 2022 to 1,466 in 2021-2022.

6.7 Programmes are organised and published on a termly basis. The autumn programme for 2022 is summarised in the following table together with reference to the desired outcomes for each activity.

Child development and school readiness		
Activity	Summary	Desired outcomes
Early education and Childcare	Early education and childcare is provided via 8 of the current 10 Children's Centres	Children's early years foundation stage learning and development is good. Parents and children's early educational entitlements and families childcare needs are met
Incredible years programme	Provided by appointment only at Wexham Road Children's Centre	The parenting skills of participants are improved, children's academic, social and emotional abilities and developed and disruptive behaviours reduced
Child minding support group	Support for registered Childminders at St Andrews Way Children's Centre	To support with the key messages around Health and Wellbeing, toileting, weaning
Parenting capacity and aspirations		
Activity	Summary	Desired outcomes
New parents programme	Support and advice programme offered via Romsey Close Children's Centre	The creation of a parent/volunteer lead group
Shine Project	A programme in support of those who have or are suffering from domestic violence	The offering of support to couples/families where there is domestic abuse and relational conflict and the associated issues that impacts families
Special Education Needs and Disabilities Support Service (SENDIASS)	Information, advice, guidance and support provided to families with children with Special Educational Needs and	To support families to access services they are entitled to, to increase the uptake of families who are vulnerable but have not

	Disabilities (SEND). Appointment based support offered via Chalvey, Monksfield Way and Penn Children's Centres	accessed services they need
Triple P programme	Parenting training provided via Penn Road Children's Centre	Improving parenting practices and parental self-efficacy and decreasing child behavioural and emotional problems
Home Start Connect Course	Connect Course provided via Orchard Avenue Children's Centre	Support for families with autistic children
Introduction to work programme	Introduction to childcare and work in school courses provided at Romsey Close and Chalvey Grove Children's Centres	To increase qualified staff in early years sector and to support families to return to work.
Child and family health and life chances: Child		
Activity	Summary	Desired outcomes
Health visitor clinics	Appointment only health visitor clinics provided via 8 of the 10 Children's Centre	Health visiting related Healthy Child Service outcomes are met
Neonatal clinics	Appointment only Neonatal Clinics provided via Romsey Close and Elliman Avenue Children's Centres	Delivery a service within the community to increase access and uptake.
Speech and language clinic	Appointment only Speech and Language Clinic provided via Romsey Close and Yew Tree Road Children's Centres	To reduce the number of children under 5 with Speech and Language challenges impacting on learning and development outcomes.
Healthy Eating Workshops	Monthly sessions provided via Chalvey Grove, Monksfield Way Penn Road and Romsey Close Children's Centres. Sessions at different centre each month.	To support families to reduce costs, targeted to families who have been identified by partners as having children who are overweight, to reduce obesity impacts later in life.

Child and family health and life chances: Family		
Activity	Summary	Desired outcomes
Healthy Pregnancy and Post Birth Workshops	Appointment only Healthy Pregnancy and Post Birth Workshops provided via Chalvey Grove Children's Centre	To positively impact all related pre and post-natal health outcomes

6.8 Programme activity is reviewed and revised by Children's Centre staff, in consultation with partners and amended accordingly in line with localised need and demand.

6.9 Analysis of the current programme and delivery model has highlighted the following in terms of overall key benefits and constraints:

Key benefits of current model	Key constraints of current model
A high proportion of families with children are registered with the service	This registration appears not to translate into high levels of regular participation
Positive use of early learning and childcare for 0-5s as a focal point for wider offer	Limitations in being able to respond to family need in a holistic way given absence of family support capacity
Partners are enabled to deliver programme activity from Centres	Activity is variable across Centres and doesn't necessarily agree with an assessment of local need. Capacity doesn't allow for community needs assessment or proactive mapping of community resources that could add to the coordinated early childhood services offer
Current model using income generation from early years model, enables opportunities for income generation to offset costs.	High level of focus on early education and childcare functions and limitations in the provision of outreach and family support given primary focus on early learning
A significant proportion of children accessing early education and childcare provision are from vulnerable families including those eligible for early years pupil premium (same criteria as Free School Meals) and those attending under 2 year old childcare funding criteria.	Scope to support vulnerable families beyond the provision of flexible early education and childcare is limited
There appears to be an increasing number of families with children with an identified special educational need accessing provision	Opportunities to support families beyond early years provision in children's centres is limited

Effective collaboration with key health partners including Health Visiting Team and midwifery to support with onsite visits, key sharing of information and delivery of groups for key messages around health prioritises.	Collaborative localised planning and deliver to jointly planned and target services could be improved
Speech and language targeted appointments within the centres offering additional space for the therapist to be able to reach more clients given the high percentage of children who have been identified as having a speech and language delay.	The pandemic and capacity issues has impacted on this element of provision
Health and wellbeing sessions in centres, schools, private nurseries targeting key messages around healthy eating, exercise and cooking on a budget - given poor outcomes re: oral health and obesity. Slough Health and wellbeing Kite Mark has been established and is addressing on a wider scale with 8 early years settings achieving accreditation.	Capacity to plan, target and coordinate this type of activity across the partnership in a holistic way
Adult education with a range of ESOL, to address access to employment, support for children in schools, benefits and form completion to early years courses is offered in the centres to offer learning in the community with onsite creche provision.	Ways of working introduced since the pandemic has impacted on the scale and nature of this element of the programme

What this tells us about the need for change

6.10 The Children's Centre approach continues to be well placed in supporting families, given the levels of family registration and its core offer. There are well established partnership arrangements with key partners at an operational level, including health and provide a focal point for many families given their early education offer and relationship to the wider network of 0 – 5 early childhood services.

6.11 The programme offer is varied across the 10 locations and does not necessarily respond to a consistently assessed understanding of local need.

6.12 There is a high level of registration to the programme but this does not translate to commensurately high levels of ongoing participation. This may be because all families with a new born child register via health visiting and midwifery but any further ongoing engagement is limited to the early education and childcare offer and associated wrap around programmes.

6.13 The programme and its associated resources have evolved over time whereby the focal point of provision has become increasingly centred on early learning and child development. There is a need to consider how provision might be shaped to respond to the wider range of family need identified whilst recognising the financial constraints the service operates within. Thought also needs to be given to how the Children's Centre programme might prioritise the use of available resources both in terms of targeting its work and enabling key functions to be maintained given the financial pressures faced by SBC. Key functions such as needs assessment, coordination, outreach and family support require specific attention.

6.14 The pandemic has provided opportunities to consider how to deliver services differently with particular regard to how whole family need is responded to as opposed to a segmented approach based on the age of children within the family unit. Consideration so therefore also be given to the alignment of Children's Centres with Early Help Strategy development and the provision of targeted early help.

6.15 The levels of need highlighted, which spans all age ranges, requires holistic consideration in order to effect change. There are good foundations to build on given that most children in Slough progress well in their early years. There is however the need and opportunity to consider how the Children's Centre delivery model could be used to further enable an integrated approach to meeting family need with particular regard to the targeting of support to those most at risk of poor outcomes and to also drive cross partnership collaboration in support of children aged 0-5 and their families. This opportunity accords with wider structural planning across children's services provided by both SBC and SCF.

6.16 There is a clear need for Children's Centres specifically and agencies more broadly might strengthen how they work together to improve a range of related outcomes for families, particularly those evidenced as an ongoing concern in needs assessment data.

7. Access to services by children and families

7.1 Families are identified through close working links with partner agencies, predominantly via health partners. When they are invited to attend health appointments at a Children's Centre, they complete a Children's Centre registration form which then identifies their place of residence and enable future attendance.

7.2 Need in relation to the provision of early childhood services is identified in partnership with schools, staff participation in relevant steering groups, voluntary sector referral, universal groups where parents are they asked what services are needed or those identified by feedback to partners. Parents focus groups and user surveys have also been used in the past.

7.3 Families most in need of services are helped and encouraged to participate in them via identification through early years provision, partners support and universal services. Families in need of targeted support are also identified by Targeted Early Help Services and Health colleagues with bespoke services established and delivered are delivered by partners, facilitated in Children's Centres.

7.4 The service works with partners to identify the families with young children in the area. A range of partner services are facilitated through Children's Centres and face to face delivery is planned in localities. The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) provides information on children eligible for funded 2-year provision and the centres make contact with the parents to offer 2 year provision or identify if any support is required. Birth data is also used to plan Health Visitor clinics and neo natal/ midwifery appointments in certain localities.

7.5 The service establishes and maintains contact with targeted families identified through attending early years provision. Families are contacted and supported by early years staff. Families identified by partners may be referred to the Social Care 'front door' and may therefore receive targeted support via either early help or statutory social care. There is no 'step down' process in place to enable families to receive support via the children's centre programme to enable them to move away from the need for targeted support.

7.6 Children's Centres work with partners, schools, outreach staff from the voluntary sector and Slough Children First staff to identify target groups and individual families most in need of intervention and support. The service offers either a venue for face-to-face services delivered by partners or support to identify local areas of need or gaps in provision. Examples include the identification of the need for holiday provision and the enabling of provision to be developed in response with partners.

7.7 Senior children's centre staff attend forums whereby partners identify at risk families and strategies and services are planned in response. If families are known to Children's Centres identification of family's needs are addressed via family contact or while attending early years provision. Data and localised locality partnerships help to identify trends and collective needs for the service to respond to.

7.8 Given structural changes which resulted in the separation of family services functions in general and family support capacity in particular, the ability of the service to reach out to targeted families and groups to enable them to access the support they need is significantly constrained.

7.9 Access to services is primarily enabled via relationships with local partners, facilitation of partnership activity and early education and childcare provision. Given structural changes and associated redeployment of resources, the service's ability to enable access is primarily reactive as opposed to being able to proactively identify family need and reach out to those in need of support to enable access to services. Where possible, the service does work with families and partners to identify gaps in provision and enables partners to respond through the facilitation of provision.

7.10 The service uses the functions it delivers and hosts to identify need and enable access to support but is constrained in doing so more broadly given that the bulk of its resources are focused on early education and childcare provision. Consideration therefore needs to be given to how best to address this issue given the ongoing financial challenges faced by SBC.

7.11 The location of centres and how this supports and enables access is also a factor to consider in relation to the any potential change to existing arrangements. As referenced in statutory guidance, "children's centres are as much about making appropriate and integrated services available, as about providing premises in particular geographical areas". From a best value and perspective, due consideration needs to be given as to how services can be delivered flexibly and cost effectively by using community assets creatively to enable early childhood services to be coordinated, delivered and accessed.

8. The quality of impact and practice

8.1 The service's practice is largely early education and childcare related. Ofsted gradings for this provision indicates that the quality and impact of this provision is good. The service is reliant on partnership activity to deliver its offer. The quality and impact of this practice is assessed, monitored and evaluated by the service in question.

8.2 There are no arrangements in place to collaboratively assess community need with partners and develop, implement and evaluate joint plans to target services and achieve collectively agreed outcomes.

8.3 The targeting of families in general terms is undertaken by the Target Early Help Service, located within Slough Children First, who also lead on the 'Strengthening Families' agenda.

8.4 The quality and impact of services in improving outcomes or sustaining already very good outcomes is varied. Focused work to enable healthy lifestyles for targeted children and their families is good with a Health Improvement Officer working with key health partners, in identifying health and wellbeing outcomes and associated plans accordingly. The development of the health and wellbeing kite mark developed to improve outcomes in all early year's settings. Post Covid challenges in responding to family need for ESOL for example remains a challenge.

8.5 Interventions which are led by early years staff are effective in attending to the early learning and development needs of those who access the provision. Follow up work is undertaken with these children and families as required. Wider follow up work and tracking for targeted families in general is undertaken by the Targeted Early Help Service.

8.6 Early years practitioners working with families in receipt of statutory children's social care intervention act as positive role models with feedback from families endorsing this approach.

8.7 Centres facilitate opportunities to volunteer and to contribute to the running of Centre and to develop formal and informal networks of support via informal groups meeting at the Centres facilitated by a lead volunteer. Parents are also encouraged to lead and support other parents at universal groups.

8.8 Practitioners delivering provision via Children's Centres do provide quality interventions that have a positive impact on the families they engage with across a variety of disciplines ranging from early education to health visiting and midwifery.

8.9 The collaborative impact of this work appears to be enabled via positive working relationships between managers and practitioners. There appears to be a need to consider how impact could be enhanced from a wider community-based perspective through integrated partnership needs assessment, targeting and integrated service planning and delivery.

9. Leadership, governance and management

9.1 The service is located within the Education and Inclusion division of Children's Services with SBC. It is led and managed by the Interim Group Manager for Children's Centres and Family Hubs, a Senior, Operations Officers and a Health Improvement Officer. The Interim Group Manager is required to provide operational leadership to both early education and childcare provision as well as the Children's Centre programme offer.

9.2 The Covid pandemic has impacted on the service delivery and associated collection and analysis of data to inform strategic and operational planning and delivery. Data is not currently being used to set and agree performance and outcome measures, specific to the Children's Centre programme across the range of partners.

9.3 Performance data and the development of associated targets does take place as part of the Council's service planning process.

9.4 Collaborative partnerships are in place at an operational level, led and enabled by partnership agency managers and staff. Staff and managed and support via partnership service policy and procedures with practitioners possessing requisite skills to discharge their duties in accordance with respective professional requirements. Early years staff are trained and 3 Inset days are delivered for this cohort of staff per year.

9.5 Previous governance mechanisms such advisory boards, which enabled parents, partners and other stakeholders to contribute to the governance of Children's Centre are no longer in place although the views of parents for example are secured and taken into account by partners who deliver the services. Families' views regarding Children's Centres are recorded and inform future planning. Requests for specific support for weaning or toilet training for example are elicited and responded to where possible via service delivery.

9.6 Targeted parents who have accessed the Centre's services and achieved positive outcomes are helped to encourage other parents to use the centre's services and be mentors when in a position to do so. Families attending universal services support others to attend.

9.7 Given related develops with regard to prevention and early help, consideration should be given to how the Children's Centre model aligns with the strategic leadership and operational management of children's services across SCB and Slough Children First (SCF) in general and targeted early help in particular.

10. Resources

10.1 Resources appear not to be systematically and strategically geared towards local determined priorities and need. Families are primarily supported by staff employed to provide early education and childcare and by those of partner agencies. Early education and childcare staff use opportunities aligned to their primary focus of early years to support a family holistically, using strong partner relationships to develop a holistic support response with services needed. Their capacity to do so is limited given their core early education and childcare duties. There appears to be no dedicated Children's Centre resources deployed beyond the premises themselves with managers and staff seeking to jointly service the needs of both early education and childcare provision and Children's Centre functions.

10.2 A large percentage of Centres are used for early education and childcare; however, a programme is coordinated termly, with partners by considering demand and need and applying a rotation of room bookings to enable the programme to be delivered for the term. Requests for space relating to under 5s provision are prioritised and accommodated.

10.3 The majority of partners have changed delivery models since the advent of the Covid pandemic. This has led to the introduction of longer but a reduced number of service delivery days in Centres. This has had a positive and negative impact as it has allowed opportunities for other services to deliver from locations they previously would not have had scope to do so but has also limited the span of provision across a full week.

10.4 Resources for children's centre specific work appear to have been eroded overtime. This has impacted on the service's capacity to undertake key Children's Centre functions, particularly those concerned with community needs assessment and planning, outreach and the provision of family support. There would be benefit in consolidation of resources so that key functions can be enabled so that coordinated activity is focused on those most in need.

11. Determining the case and options for change

Summary of learning outcomes

11.1 The following information serves as a summary of the learning arising from review work undertaken with particular regard to current arrangements enabling the provision and coordination of early childhood services.

Capacity to provide key functions diminished overtime

11.2 Organisation change and associated reduction and / or redeployment of resource has had a bearing on the current model being able to maintain key functions traditionally undertaken by children's centres and meet need, particularly for those most in need of support. Notwithstanding the impact of the Covid pandemic, the relatively low levels of participation in the service beyond registration would seem to suggest that the service has difficulty in enabling ongoing family engagement and facilitating the development and coordination of the wider offer of early childhood services.

11.3 Managers and staff have been effective in creatively using available resources in order sustain provision, pre and post Pandemic, however renewed consideration should be given as to how best to deliver against identified need and Children's Centre core requirements. Key functions relating to outreach and family support are being discharged elsewhere in the partnership via voluntary sector organisations who deliver related work and in Targeted Early Help for example. Consideration should therefore be given to consolidating current resources so that they may focus on directly attending to core children's centre specific functions in collaboration with other related services.

The model has evolved to be primarily concerned with the provision of early education and childcare

11.4 The direct provision of early education and childcare is central to the current model. It provides this service across 8 of the current 10 Children's Centres, with most service staff concerned with its provision. Whilst this provides a valued service, specific analysis undertaken in relation to the provision of early education and childcare indicates that much of this provision may not be critical from a childcare sufficiency perspective. The Council is not statutorily required to directly deliver early education and childcare although it is required to ensure, as far as is reasonable, that sufficient provision is in place. Given this, consideration should therefore be given to the potential for reducing direct delivery of early education and childcare and where necessary, working with the private, voluntary and independent sector to address any gaps in the provider market. This may enable the release of resources to deploy for Children's Centre specific functions.

Core functions and offer maintained but spread thinly and unevenly across the range of centres and associated localities

11.5 Give ongoing resource challenges experienced by partners in general and the Council in particular, coupled with the impact of the Covid pandemic, Children's Centres have creatively maintained services across the majority of centres. Analysis of the offer suggests that there would be value in considering how best to provide Children's Centre functions and programmes so that they have maximum impact on those who most need support. These considerations should include options for consolidation of the model so that it may enable the focusing of work on those most in need, whilst aligning it to the wider range of assets across children's services and partners.

Capacity to identify and target those most in need of support is limited

11.6 Current arrangements, which include a primary focus on early education and childcare, do not enable the service to carry out the necessary work to systematically assess need, identify those most in need of targeted support and coordinate early childhood services in response. There is a strong relationship between the need to exercise this function and related work that is undertaken by Targeted Early Help, particularly the development of an Early help Strategy and the delivery of the Strengthening Families programme. Consideration therefore needs to be given to revising arrangements to enable these functions to be fulfilled in collaboration with

related services and partners via the family network and hub developments referenced within the SCF Business Plan.

11.7 In light of this learning, the following points summarise case for change:

- The need to consolidate limited resources to enable children's centre functions to be renewed;
- The need to enable key children's centre functions to be fulfilled and focused on core Children's Centre requirements; and
- The recognition that resources and associated approach needs to enable and ensure the coordination and targeting of early childhood services at the most vulnerable

11.8 As a consequence, consideration should therefore be given to:

- Options for the reduce in the current number of centres to consolidate offer and enable increase in identification and targeting of support for those most in need. This need is informed by the aim to secure best value in the securing of the services in question and responding to the case for change in current arrangements outlined in this report; and
- Alignment of a revised model to early help strategy development in general and the associated development of family networks in particular.

11.9 Options developed will required consultation with residents to secure views and opinions on any considered change. This consultation should be inclusive of partners and stakeholders to obtain a rounded view of options including alternatives to the ones outlined. Once consultation is undertaken, options may be modified and recommendations for change finalised based on its outcome. During this process due consideration also needs to be given to how best to use existing and associated community assets to enable core early childhood services delivered by partners and the service itself to be maintained.

Alternative operating model

11.10 Consideration should be given to a revised model which provides renewed focus on the core functions of Children's Centre coordination, outreach and family support and enables the targeting of support at those who most need it. The creation of dedicated resource to undertake these functions could enable a refreshed approach to identifying need in collaboration with partners and developing and coordinating a refreshed offer of early childhood services. It would also enable the creation of a revised model that can serve as the framework for the developing family hub and family network model.

11.11 Conceptually, Children's Centres are a vehicle for enabling a partnership approach to the provision of early childhood services to meet need. An alternative operating model to the current one on Slough can be developed by renewing its approach to leading and coordinating its approach in collaboration with schools, health providers, social care and the voluntary and community sector. It can do so by

reshaping its model in order to re-establish and re-focus coordination, outreach and family support capacity in order to lead and coordinate associated capacity so that it is collaboratively targeted at families most in need of support.

11.12 Instead of an approach, predicated on the sole use of existing Centre buildings, the model would seek to develop a more flexible and dynamic offer by identifying and utilising community assets in collaboration with associated services and partners. The following figure illustrates the different related components and how they might operate within a remodelled service delivery arrangement. Key aspects include:

- An approach centred on the coordination of early childhood services in collaboration with partners;
- A way of working that isn't reliant on the use of existing premises to enable the development and deliver of the early childhood services offer;
- The establishing of dedicated Children's Centre resource to attend to the key functions of coordination, outreach and family support; and
- To use this resource to connect with related resources and functions across the partnership to achieve the aim of children's centre making available universal and targeted early childhood services and supporting child and family access to them.

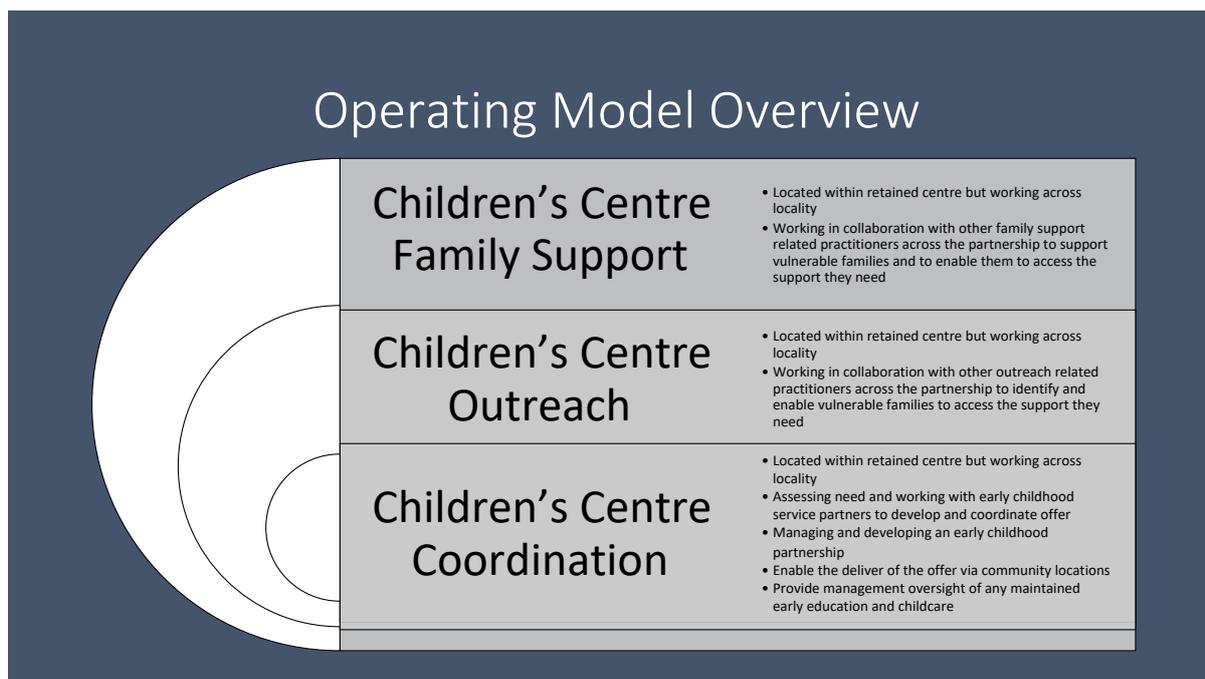
11.13 Consideration should be given to a 'three centre' model because it would provide the requisite capacity to enable the proposed new way of working to be introduced and embedded, whilst also allowing for alignment with existing locality based approaches applied by SBC and its partners. Alignment with current community services locations to create a locality-based model provides a logical framework.

11.14 Consideration should also be given to aligning and integrating remodelled centres with maintained, directly delivered childcare in order to maximise use of premises. Analysis suggests that the Centres at Chalvey Grove and Romsey Close may best placed to meet this dual function as indicated in the preferred option with Penn Road acting as the Children's Centre reference point in the north of the Borough.

11.15 The model would maintain usage of, and operate from retained Centre/s for use as the base from which to assess and map need for early childhood services across the borough in collaboration with partners. These bases could provide the footprint for the wider family network model currently under development.

11.16 Premises may also be used to continue to house critical joint partnership, early childhood service operations within but would become the principal operations hub for a boroughwide network of early childhood services. The model would align to the development of the Early Help Strategy and associated work regarding a family network approach to delivering coordinated preventative early help to families.

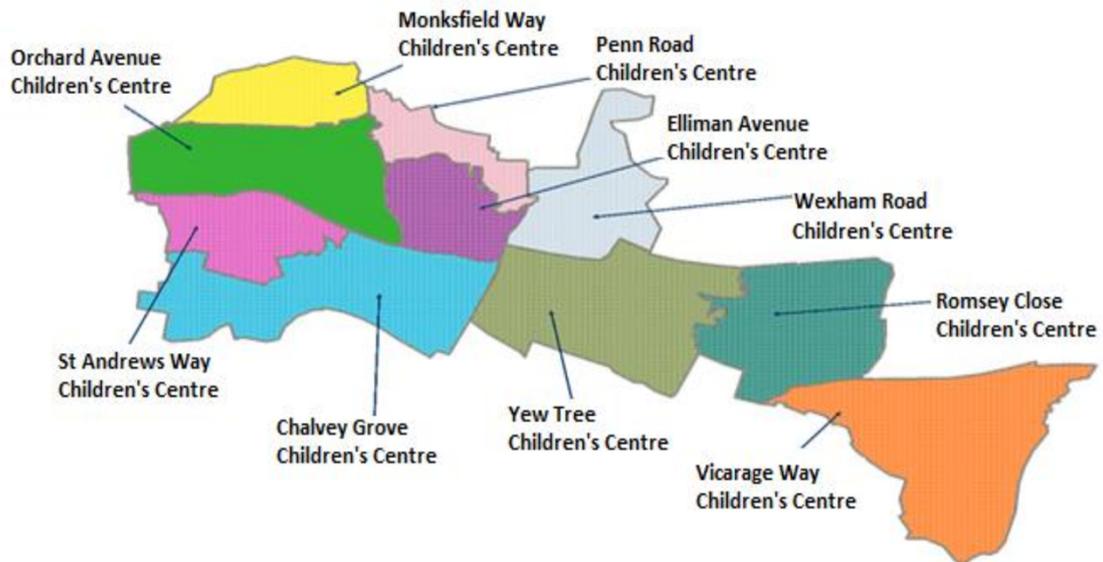
11.17 Figure below illustrates a draft outline operating model for a revised Children's Centre delivery model.



11.18 If approval is afforded to consult on options for change to current arrangement, key partners will be engaged as part of the consultation process in order to aid the process of determining how best a revised operating model might be created and implemented.

Appendix 1: Slough Children's Centre locations

Colour coding relates to the original lower super output areas used to map 0 – 5 populations the Centres were established to serve.



Appendix 2

What's On in Slough Children's Centres Autumn Term 2022

Children's Centres
Contact details

Chalvey Grove Children's Centre
Chalvey Grove, SL1 2IE (Chalvey)
Tel: 01753 574 387

Elliman Avenue Children's Centre
Elliman Avenue, SL2 5BA (Lismore Park)
Tel: 01753 896 688

Monksfield Way Children's Centre
Monksfield Way, SL2 1QX (Britwell)
Tel: 01753 578691

Orchard Avenue Children's Centre
Orchard Avenue, SL1 6HE (Haymill)
Tel: 01628 661789

Penn Road Children's Centre
Penn Road, SL2 1PG (Manor Park)
Tel: 01753 574 420

Romsey Close Children's Centre
Romsey Close, SL3 8PE (Langley)
Tel: 01753 540 797

St. Andrews Way Children's Centre
St. Andrew's Way, SL1 5NL (Cippenham)
Tel: 01628 559085

Vicarage Way Children's Centre
Vicarage Way, SL3 0JY (Cobnbrook)
Tel: 01753 684 455

Wexham Road Children's Centre
Wexham Road, SL2 5JW (Wexham)
Tel: 01753 533 543

Yew Tree Road Children's Centre
Yew Tree Road, SL1 2AR (Town Centre)
Tel: 01753 527 571

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Early Years Childcare / Education All Centres Times / Sessions Vary Contact Children's Centres for details	Early Years Childcare / Education All Centres Times / Sessions Vary Contact Children's Centres for details	Early Years Childcare / Education All Centres Times / Sessions Vary Contact Children's Centres for details	Early Years Childcare / Education All Centres Times / Sessions Vary Contact Children's Centres for details	Early Years Childcare / Education All Centres Times / Sessions Vary Contact Children's Centres for details
Solutions 4 Health Health Visitor Clinic Appointment Only Chalvey Grove 08:45 - 17:00	Solutions 4 Health Health Visitor Clinic Appointment Only Elliman Avenue 09:15 - 16:00	Solutions 4 Health Health Visitor Clinic Appointment Only Romsey Close 08:45 - 17:00	Solutions 4 Health Health Visitor Clinic Appointment Only Chalvey Grove 08:45 - 17:00	Solutions 4 Health Health Visitor Clinic Appointment Only Penn Road 08:45 - 17:00
NHS Speech and Language Clinic Appointment Only Romsey Close 5th Sept—17th Oct Times Vary	Frimley Health Neonatal Clinics Appointment Only Elliman Avenue 09:00 - 16:00	Frimley Health Neonatal Clinics Appointment Only Romsey Close 09:00 - 16:00	Solutions 4 Health Health Visitor Clinic Appointment Only Monksfield Way 09:15 - 15:45	Solutions 4 Health Health Visitor Clinic Appointment Only Wexham Road 09:00 - 16:00
Solutions 4 Health Health Visitor Clinic Appointment Only Wexham Road 09:00 - 16:00	Solutions 4 Health Health Visitor Clinic Appointment Only Wexham Road 09:00 - 16:00	Solutions 4 Health Health Visitor Clinic Appointment Only Wexham Road 09:00 - 16:00	Solutions 4 Health Health Visitor Clinic Appointment Only Wexham Road 09:00 - 16:00	Solutions 4 Health Health Visitor Clinic Appointment Only Yew Tree 09:00 - 15:00
Solutions 4 Health Health Visitor Clinic Appointment Only Yew Tree 09:00 - 15:00	Solutions 4 Health Health Visitor Drop In Clinic Yew Tree 09:30 - 12:30	Solutions 4 Health Health Visitor Clinic Appointment Only Yew Tree 09:00 - 15:00	Solutions 4 Health Health Visitor Clinic Appointment Only Yew Tree 09:00 - 15:00	New Parents Group 6 week Programme Booking Required Romsey Close 09:30—11:00 16th Sept—21st Oct
Slough Children First Shine Project By Invite Only Penn Road 09:30—12 noon 3rd Oct—12th Dec	NHS Speech and Language Clinic Appointment Only Yew Tree Road 6th Sept to 27th Oct Times Vary	Solutions 4 Health Health Visitor Clinic Appointment Only Vicarage Way 09:15 - 16:00 Every 2nd and 4th Week	Slough Children First SENDAID Appointment Only Monksfield Way Monthly Starts 15th Sept to 1st Dec	Slough Children First SENDAID Appointment Only Romsey Close Monthly Starts 30th Sept—14th Dec
Slough Children First SENDAID Appointment Only Chalvey Grove Monthly Starts 19th Sept to 5th Dec	Healthy Eating Workshop !!! Booking Required Monthly sessions Chalvey Grove, Monksfield Way Penn Road, Romsey Close Sessions will be at a different centre each month Dates to be Confirmed Contact your nearest center for details	Frimley Health Healthy Pregnancy and Post Birth Workshops Appointment Only Chalvey Grove 12 noon - 1:30	Slough Children First Teen Triple P Programme Invite Only Penn Road 11:00 - 15:00 29th Sept—9th Dec	
Home start Connect Course Registration Required Orchard Avenue 09:30—11:30 3rd Oct to 14th Nov		WEA Introduction to Working in a School Registration Required Chalvey Grove 09:30 - 11:30 2nd Nov to 14th Dec	Slough Children First Urdu Triple P Programme Invite Only Yew Tree Road 09:00 - 14:00 29th Sept—9th Dec	
Slough Children First incredible Years Programme Invite Only Wexham Road 09:00 - 15:00		Slough Children First SEND Information and Guidance Invite Only Penn Road 09:00—12 noon		
WEA Introduction to Working in Childcare Registration Required Romsey Close 09:30 - 11:30 31st Oct—12th Dec		Childminder Support Group Registered Childminders Only Booking Required St Andrews Way 09:00 to 11:00		

Appendix 3

Children's Centre Remodelling

Premises Children's Centre Provision and Participation Summary

1. Introduction

1.1 The information is aligned to work being undertaken to determine options in relation to future use of existing Children's Centre premises.

1.2 Its purpose is to inform consideration in relation to variation in the current Children's Centre delivery model with particular regard to partner related activity and current participation levels.

1.3 It enables this consideration by providing a 'setting by setting' analysis of each of the 10 locations with regard to:

- **Location and context:** Overview of location and local demographics
- **Participation:** Child and family participation in centre activity
- **Agency / service occupancy:** Name and type of service using facilities (including directly managed early learning and childcare);
- **Frequency of use:** the day, time and frequency of usage;
- **Terms of usage:** Formal agreements in place including leases, service level agreements, specifying terms of usage;
- **Payment for use:** Payment for use of facility via lease agreement, rent, periodic payment or contribution to premises running costs;
- **Use of dependency on auxiliary support:** Use of centre reception staff, administration, cleaning services for example; and
- **Other issues of note:** Any additional information that will enable a full understanding of current premises usage.

Centre	Analysis
1.Monksfield Way Children's Centre, Monksfield Way, Slough, SL2 1QX	<p>Location and context</p> <p>1.1 Located within the ward of Britwell and Northborough adjoining the Farnham ward. The area is also serviced by 3 PVI providers, 7 childminders and nursery provision in 2 primary schools.</p> <p>1.2 Britwell & Northborough has a population of circa 11,000 and is the most deprived ward in Slough on the index of multiple deprivation.</p> <p>1.3 6% of Slough 0-5 population live in the Monksfield Way catchment area.</p> <p>Participation</p> <p>1.4 364 children and families participated in Children's Centre activity in October 2022.</p>

	<p>1.5 Termly 3 year average attendance for childcare is 58 children.</p> <p>Premises usage</p> <p>1.6 Solutions 4 Health – No Charge / No lease</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Visitor services / Development checks • Thursdays, 09:15am to 15:45pm <p>1.7 Slough Children First – No Charge/ No lease</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play Therapy sessions • Tuesdays, 13:00 to 16:00 <p>1.8 Birmingham Children’s Trust – Payment for room use as invoiced at end of term - external authority</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact Visits • Thursday 11:30am to 16:00 <p>1.9 Slough Children First No charge / No lease</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client Support Meetings • Various days / times <p>1.10 Slough Children First- No charge/ No lease</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Triple P Programme • Monday, 09:00 to 15:00 <p>1.11 Staff sign in/out visitors, 1 general support assistant 30 hour 9-3.15, Cleaner employed 3 hours morning only to clean before and after use, set up rooms, no formal leases in place.</p> <p>1.12 Most staff are employed for early years – The usage of the centre is currently directed to term time due to staffing capacity.</p> <p>1.13 Early years provision is term time only 8 - 4.15</p>
<p>2.Chalvey Grove Children’s Centre, Chalvey Grove, Slough, SL1 2TE</p>	<p>Location and context</p> <p>2.1 Located within the ward of Chalvey adjoining the Cippenham Meadows ward. The area is also serviced by 5 PVI providers, a Nursery School, 1 childminder and nursery provision in 1 primary school.</p> <p>2.2 Britwell & Northborough has a population of 13.3K and is the second most deprived ward in Slough on the index of multiple deprivation.</p> <p>2.3 15.5% of Slough 0-5 population live in the Chalvey Grove catchment area.</p>

	<p>Participation</p> <p>2.4 175 children and families participated in children’s centre activity in October 2022.</p> <p>2.5 A termly average of 75 children attend for early learning and childcare provision.</p> <p>Premises usage</p> <p>2.6 Solutions 4 Health – No Charge / No lease</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Visitor services / Development checks • Mondays and Thursdays, 08:45 to 17:00 <p>2.7 Berkshire Sensory Consortium Service No charge / No lease</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chatty Monkeys • Tuesdays – every fortnight 12:45 to 14:45 <p>2.8 Frimley Health – NHS – No charge / No lease</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Pregnancy Workshop • Wednesdays, 12:15 to 13:15 <p>2.9 Frimley Health – NHS – No charge / No lease</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post Birth Workshop • Wednesdays, 13:30 to 14:30 <p>2.10 Slough Children First – No charge / No lease</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact Visits • Monday to Friday, 15:15 to 17:45 <p>2.11 Library provision for book borrowing. IT access and printer – Only supported by staff employed to work in children’s centre</p> <p>2.12 No reception/ General support staff currently employed, house keeper employed 37 hours – Early years staff cover services at start or end of day, set up, signing in visitors opening and closing of building.</p> <p>2.13 Early years provision, all year open 8-6pm</p>
<p>3.Penn Road, Penn Road, SL2 1PG</p>	<p>Location and context</p> <p>3.1 Located within the ward of Baylis and Stoke. The area is also serviced by 2 PVI providers, 1 childminder and nursery provision in 2 primary schools.</p> <p>3.2 Baylis and Stoke has a population of 9.5K and is the third most deprived ward in Slough on the index of multiple deprivation.</p>

	<p>3.3 8.5% of Slough 0-5 population live in the Penn Road catchment area.</p> <p>Participation</p> <p>3.4 204 children and families participated in children's centre activity in October 2022.</p> <p>3.5 A termly average of 58 children attend for early learning and childcare provision.</p> <p>Premises usage</p> <p>3.6 Solutions 4 Health – No charge /No lease</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Visitor services / Development checks • Fridays, 08:45 to 17:00 <p>3.7 Slough Children First – Charge for creche places / no lease</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shine Project • Tuesdays 09:30 to 11:30 <p>3.8 Slough Children First – No charge / No lease</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send IAG Sessions • Wednesday, 09:00 to 12noon <p>3.9 WEA – Adult Learning – charge for creche places / no lease</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English Classes • Wednesdays, 09:30 to 11:30 <p>3.10 Slough Children First – No charge / No lease</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incredible Years Programme • Wednesday, 12noon to 17:00 <p>3.11 Slough Children First – No charge / No lease</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact Visits • Various days / times <p>3.12 Slough Children First – No charge / No lease</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training preparation meetings • Various days / times <p>3.13 Berkshire NHS – No charge / No lease</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speech and Language Therapy • Wednesday, 09:00 to 16:00 (various dates) <p>3.14 Public self-scanner – digital support</p>
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	<p>3.15 General support staff currently employed 20hours starting 7:45, House keeper employed 37 hours – Early years staff cover services at start or end of day, set up, signing in visitors opening and closing of building</p> <p>3.16 Early Years Provision 8am-6pm centres and early years open all year.</p>
<p>4.Romsey Close Children's Centre, Romsey Close, SL3 8PE</p>	<p>Location and context</p> <p>4.1 Located within the ward of Langley Kedermister, adjoining Langley St Mary's and Foxborough wards.</p> <p>4.2 The area is also serviced by 2 PVI providers, 1 childminder and nursery provision in 2 primary schools.</p> <p>4.3 Langley Kedermister has a population of 10.7K and is the ninth most deprived ward in Slough on the index of multiple deprivation.</p> <p>4.4 12.6% of Slough 0-5 population live in the Romsey Close catchment area.</p> <p>Participation</p> <p>4.5 43 children and families participated in children's centre activity in October 2022.</p> <p>4.6 A termly average of 69 children attend for early education and childcare provision</p> <p>Premises usage</p> <p>4.7 Solutions 4 Health – No charge/ No lease</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Visitor services / Development checks • Wednesdays, 08:45 to 17:00 <p>4.8 Frimley Health – NHS – No charge / No lease</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neo - natal support Clinic • Wednesdays, 09:00 to 16:00 <p>4.9 Berkshire NHS No charge / No lease</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speech and Language Therapy • Various days / times <p>4.10 Slough Children First – No charge no lease</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Triple P Programme • Tuesday, 09:00 to 15:00 <p>4.11 Slough Children First – No charge / No lease</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact Visits • Mon, Tues, and Friday 15:30 to 17:00

	<p>4.12 Berkshire NHS – No charge / No lease</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speech and Language Therapy • Mondays, 09:00 to 16:00 (various dates) <p>4.13 General support staff currently employed 9- 3.15pm, House keeper employed 37 hours – Early years staff cover services at start or end of day, set up, signing in visitors opening and closing of building.</p> <p>4.14 Early years provision 8am -6pm all year. Centre and services open all year.</p>
<p>5. Yew Tree Road Children's Centre, Yew Tree Road, Slough SL1 2AR</p>	<p>Location and context</p> <p>5.1 Located within the ward of Central, adjoining Upton ward.</p> <p>5.2 The area is also serviced by 3 PVI providers, 2 childminders and nursery provision in 4 primary schools.</p> <p>5.3 Central has a population of 14K and is the seventh most deprived ward in Slough on the index of multiple deprivation.</p> <p>5.4 14% of 0-5 year olds live in the Yew Tree catchment area.</p> <p>Participation</p> <p>5.5 72 children and families participated in children's centre activity in October 2022.</p> <p>5.6 A termly average of 30 children attend for early education and childcare provision</p> <p>Premises usage</p> <p>5.7 Solutions 4 Health – No charge/ No lease</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Visitor services / Development checks • Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri, 09:15 to 15:45 <p>5.8 Solutions 4 Health – No charge/ No lease</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baby wellbeing drop-in clinic • Tuesdays, 09:30 to 12:30 <p>5.9 Berkshire NHS – No charge / No lease</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speech and Language Therapy • Tuesdays, 09:00 to 16:00 (various dates) <p>5.10 Healthy start supplier</p>

	<p>5.11 General support staff currently employed, House keeper employed 20hours – Early years staff cover services at start or end of day, set up, signing in visitors opening and closing of building carried out by school site controller. Only deputy and general support assistant all year round.</p> <p>5.12 Early years provision: 8.45 - 4.15 term-time only. Centre open all year.</p>
<p>6.St Andrews Way Children's Centre, St Andrews Way, Slough SL1 5NL</p>	<p>Location and context</p> <p>6.1 Located within the ward of Cippenham Green.</p> <p>6.2 The area is also serviced by 2 PVI providers, 1 Nursery School and 2 schools with nursery provision.</p> <p>6.3 Cippenham Green has a population of 10K and is the second least most deprived ward in Slough on the index of multiple deprivation.</p> <p>6.4 9% of 0 – 5 year olds live in the St Andrew's Way catchment area.</p> <p>6.5 Currently no early years provision provided via this centre since the Covid pandemic.</p> <p>Participation</p> <p>6.6 No children and families participated in children's centre activity in October 2022.</p> <p>Previous usage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Childminder – drop-in sessions – weekly • Stay and Play sessions – Operations team – monthly • HV clinic weekly – September <p>6.7 Early years provision combined with Orchard Avenue due to staffing capacity. Operation term time only.</p>
<p>7.Orchard Avenue Children's Centre, Orchard Avenue, Slough, SL1 6HE</p>	<p>Location and context</p> <p>7.1 Located within the ward of Haymill and Lynch Hill.</p> <p>7.2 The area is also serviced by 3 PVI providers, 2 schools with nursery provision and 2 child-minders.</p> <p>7.3 Haymill and Lynch Hill has a population of 9K and is ranked twelfth on the ward level index of multiple deprivation.</p> <p>7.4 9% of 0 – 5 year olds live in the Orchard Avenue catchment area.</p>

	<p>Participation</p> <p>7.5 116 children and families participated in children's centre activity in October 2022.</p> <p>7.6 A termly average of 27 children attend for early education and childcare provision</p> <p>Premises usage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home-start • Connect, Autism Support Group – Charge for creche care / no lease • Wednesday, 09:00 to 12noon <p>7.7 Early Years provision 8:45-4.15. Operates term-time only.</p>
8.Elliman Avenue Children's Centre, Slough, SL2 5BA	<p>Location and context</p> <p>8.1 Located within the ward of Elliman.</p> <p>8.2 The area is also serviced by 1 PVI providers, 2 Maintained Nursery School, 1 school with nursery provision and 2 child-minders.</p> <p>8.3 Elliman has a population of 9K and is ranked eighth on the ward level index of multiple deprivation.</p> <p>8.4 10% of 0 – 5 year olds live in the Elliman Avenue catchment area.</p> <p>8.5 Currently no early years provision provided from the Centre.</p> <p>Participation</p> <p>8.6 7 children and families participated in children's centre activity in October 2022.</p> <p>Premises usage</p> <p>8.7 Solutions 4 Health – No charge / No lease</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Visitor services / Development checks • Tuesday 09:15 to 15:45 <p>8.8 Frimley Health – NHS – No charge /No lease</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neo - natal support Clinic • Tuesdays, 09:00 to 15:45 <p>8.9 Early years provision combined at Penn Road due to staffing capacity. Currently operations are covered by the operations team to enable opening and closing.</p>

<p>9.Wexham Road Children's Centre, Slough, SL2 5JW</p>	<p>Location and context</p> <p>9.1 Located within the ward of Elliman, adjoining Wexham Lea and Central wards.</p> <p>9.2 The area is also serviced by 1 PVI providers, 2 Maintained Nursery School, 1 school with nursery provision and 2 child-minders.</p> <p>9.3 Elliman has a population of 9K and is ranked fourth on the ward level index of multiple deprivation.</p> <p>9.4 10% of 0 – 5 year olds live in the Wexham Road catchment area.</p> <p>Participation</p> <p>9.5 306 children and families participated in children's centre activity in October 2022.</p> <p>9.6 A termly average of 20 children attend for early education and childcare provision</p> <p>Premises usage</p> <p>9.7 Solutions 4 Health – No charge / No lease</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Visitor services / Development checks • Monday to Friday, 09:00 to 16:00 • SCF – family meetings weekly – No charge / no lease • Library borrowing facilities – Staffed by early years staff <p>9.8 Early years provision 8:45-4.15 TTO – Centre operational all year. Services covered during the holidays by early years staff. House keeper employed 20 hours to clean / General support assistant 30hours to prepare rooms, signing in visitors, paper work</p>
<p>10.Vicarage Way Children's Centre, Slough, SL3 0JY</p>	<p>Location and context</p> <p>10.1 Located within the ward of Colnbrook and Poyle.</p> <p>10.2 The area is also serviced by 1 PVI providers and 2 schools with nursery provision.</p> <p>10.3 Colnbrook and Poyle has a population of 6.5K and is ranked eighth on the ward level index of multiple deprivation.</p> <p>10.4. 4% of 0 – 5 year olds live in the Vicarage Way catchment area.</p> <p>Participation</p> <p>10.5 116 children and families participated in children's centre activity in October 2022.</p>

	<p>10.6 A termly average of 22 children attend for early education and childcare provision</p> <p>Premises usage</p> <p>10.7 Solutions 4 Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Health Visitor services / Development checks – no charge no lease• Wednesdays, 09:00 to 16:00 (every 2nd and 4th week)• Library borrowing facilities – Staffed by early years staff <p>10.8 Early years provision 8:45-4.15 term-time only. Only early years staff employed, Centre covered during holidays by early year staff.</p>
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Children's Centre Remodelling

Early Education and Childcare Provision Review

Executive Summary

1.1 Given the prominent role the direct delivery of early education and childcare plays in SBC's Children's Centre model, separate and detailed consideration has been given to this provision in order to inform options for change to the Children's Centre programme whole.

1.2 Consideration has been given to childcare sufficiency data, provision uptake coupled with officer analysis of what the information is telling us about the scope for change to existing arrangements for the provision of directly delivered early education and childcare via SBC's Children's Centres.

1.3 Analysis of the data referenced in this report has resulted in the following summary conclusions being drawn:

- SBC is delivering early education and childcare via its Children's Centres in areas where data suggests there is surplus capacity;
- Data also suggests that SBC's directly delivered offer is being provided in areas with sufficient capacity to meet requirements and need in the absence of directly provided provision; and
- SBC is delivering early education and childcare via its Children's Centres at cost to the Council and that there is scope to reduce this cost by the discontinuation of directly managed provision within the overall context of making changes to its Children's centre delivery model.

1.4 Given the imperative to achieve best value in the provision of the services in question, consideration should be given to the following summary options for discontinuation of directly delivered early education and childcare, within the overall context of wider options for change to the Children's Centre programme. These options agree with the overall options for change presented in the overarching cabinet report.

Early education and childcare delivery options	Potential benefits	Potential constraints
1. To discontinue all directly delivered early education and childcare provision provided by the Council through its Children's Centres	Reduces cost and potentially enables the wider economy of providers in the market to expand their provision where demand requires	Full discontinuation would present challenges in ensuring sufficiency requirements are met and access for vulnerable children in particular maintained. Family access choices will also be limited. It would be challenging to enable the market to fully address potential gaps in provision in the short to mid-term.

Total number of children attending provision as of Sept 2022 potentially affected by option for change: 347		Total number of vulnerable children potentially affect by option for change: 197 / 347
2. To discontinue directly delivered early education and childcare provision provided by the Council from 7 Children's Centres whilst maintaining direct delivery via 3 (Recommended)	Reduces cost and potentially enables the wider economy of providers in the market to expand their provision where demand requires whilst maintaining provision in key areas of need and demand	Discontinuation will present challenges in ensuring sufficiency requirements are met although analysis indicates this risk can be addressed through actions to mitigate impact with particular regard to market engagement and the phasing of change to minimise any negative impact. Due consideration needs to be given to the access needs of vulnerable children in particular
Total number of children attending provision as of Sept 2022 potentially affected by option for change: 176		Total number of vulnerable children potentially affect by option for change: 144 / 176
3. To discontinue directly delivered early education and childcare provision provided by the Council from 8 Children's Centres whilst maintaining direct delivery via 2	Reduces cost and enables the wider economy of providers in the market to potentially expand their provision where demand requires whilst maintaining provision in key areas of need and demand	Discontinuation will present challenges in ensuring sufficiency requirements are met although analysis indicates this risk can be addressed through actions to mitigate impact with particular regard to market engagement and the phasing of change to minimise any negative impact. Due consideration needs to be given to the access needs of vulnerable children in particular
Total number of children attending provision as of Sept 2022 potentially affected by option for change: 203		Total number of vulnerable children potentially affect by option for change: 157 / 203
4. To continue to provide existing childcare arrangements	No changes will be made to existing provision.	<p>The target savings for reducing buildings will not be achieved.</p> <p>The Council will continue to subsidise childcare costs by provision of buildings.</p> <p>The Council will continue to directly provide a significant number of childcare places without a clear rationale as to why this is appropriate, which is contrary to the legislation.</p> <p>The Council continuing to provide a significant number of childcare places has the potential of</p>

		distorting the market and putting other childcare operators out of business or preventing new providers entering the market.
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1.5 It should be noted that the implementation of any of the above options would require carefully consideration in terms of transition. A phased approach would be required so that families affected by any change are supported to make timely, alternative arrangements for childcare should this be necessary. It should also be noted that careful attention would also need to be paid to implementation from the perspective of impact on staff whose employment may be affected by any agreed change. In addition, due time and capacity would also need to be afforded so that work can be undertaken with external providers who may wish to develop or extend their offers in light of any agreed changes should that be necessary.

1.6 The table below provides a 'centre by centre' summary of the bearing these options have on each of the current centres offer of directly delivered early learning and childcare should they be perused.

Current Children's Centre location	Maintained as Council delivered early education and childcare			
	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
Chalvey Grove	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Elliman Avenue	No	No	No	Yes
Monksfield Way	No	No	No	Yes
Orchard Avenue	No	No	No	Yes
Penn Road	No	No	No	Yes
Romsey Close	No	Yes	No	Yes
St Andrew's Way	No	No	No	Yes
Vicarage Way	No	No	No	Yes
Wexham Road	No	No	No	Yes
Yew Tree Road	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

Children's Centre Remodelling Early Education and Childcare Provision Review

Purpose of paper

To detail review analysis and findings in relation to the provision of directly delivered early education and childcare services provided by Slough Borough Council (SBC) via its Children's Centres.

1. Summary overview

1.1 The context within which early education and childcare provision is located can fluctuate considerably from year to year. The childcare economy is complex. The offer comprises a range of types of provision to meet different needs ranging from free entitlement education to more generic childcare. Capacity types also vary from setting to setting with providers offering a mixed economy of funded places and paid for childcare, some all year round and others term-time only. It is therefore both difficult and unhelpful to try to determine an absolute position in terms of sufficiency.

1.2 A range of issues impact on the provision economy. Demand for childcare in general and need for 2, 3 and 4 year olds and 30 hours places in particular is variable and likely to fluctuate. There are also local issues to address in relation to 2 year old funded places both in terms of uptake and the provision of places.

1.3 The economic climate also has a marked bearing on supply and demand, with both parents and providers having to respond to 'cost of living' difficulties and the associated impact this has on business viability of providers and affordability of access families. These factors, amongst others makes it challenging to carry out exacting analysis of supply, demand and the impact of any change that might be proposed and agreed.

1.4 Birth data used to forecast demand for example, suggests that current supply of places overall doesn't match demand, however consideration at a more locality-based level indicates a more mixed picture.

1.5 Current data and analysis indicates that Monksfield Way Children's Centre for example operates in a catchment area with a significant surplus of places, whereas Chalvey Grove Children's Centre catchment area has a notable deficit of places. It is important to note that this data does not give a definitive position in relation to supply and demand. Local intelligence gathered during the annual Childcare Sufficiency Assessment is key to building up a more accurate picture of both the supply and the nature of the offer in terms of type and age range and the demand based on a range of data sources including birth rate projections and census data.

1.6 The analysis and review work informing potential options for change to current directly delivered early education and childcare provision via Children's Centres has drawn on a combination of existing data and local intelligence to determine potential options for change. This analysis will be strengthened via both the consultation process and the annual Childcare Sufficiency Assessment once complete.

1.7 Local intelligence indicates that there are providers in the market who may be interested in developing their provision in response to changes SBC may make to its directly delivered provision. Further work will be undertaken with the wider economy of provider to explore options fully should agreement to consult be given. This work should be informed by recognition of the challenges faced by the sector which includes recruitment and retention difficulties.

1.8 Content and analysis referenced in this report is based on current available data coupled with a local perspective on what the information is telling us about the scope for change to existing arrangements for the provision of directly delivered early education and childcare via SBC's Children's Centres. Work is currently being progressed to refresh the current CSA.

1.9 The next CSA will focus on the economic factors impacting on settings ability to provide places based on their registration capacity and how this compares to the overall picture of deficit / surplus provision in Slough.

1.10 The outcome of the next CSA, aligned to consultation on options for change will enable a more considered understanding of the impact of any change to inform final recommendations for consideration within the wider context of options for change to the Children's Centre delivery model itself.

2. Background and context

2.1 Work has been progressed over the past year to explore the feasibility of modifying existing arrangements for the provision of Children's Centres in Slough. Central to this work is consideration of the role directly delivered early education and childcare plays in the current children's centre delivery model.

2.2 Slough has 10 Children's Centres. 8 of the 10 centres provide directly delivered early education and childcare.

2.3 Legislation in relation to Children's Centre is contained in The Childcare Act 2006, and underpinned by Sure Start Children's Centres Statutory Guidance, which defines a Children's Centre a place or a group of places: which is managed by or on behalf of, or under arrangements with, the local authority with a view to securing that early childhood services in the local authority's area are made available in an integrated way; through which early childhood services are made available (either by providing the services on site, or by providing advice and assistance on gaining access to services elsewhere); and, at which activities for young children are provided.

2.4 The Statutory Guidance states that "Children's Centres are as much about making appropriate and integrated services available, as about providing premises in particular geographical areas. A Children's Centre should make available universal and targeted early childhood services either by providing the services at the centre itself or by providing advice and assistance to parents (mothers and fathers) and prospective parents in accessing services provided elsewhere". The guidance defines the core purpose as being to improve outcomes for young children and their families and reduce inequalities between families in greatest need and their peers in:

- child development and school readiness;
- parenting aspirations and parenting skills; and,
- child and family health and life chances.

2.5 The Childcare Act 2006 and 2016 and the associated statutory guidance for local authorities on Early Education and Childcare, March 2017 requires SBC to secure sufficient childcare, as far as is reasonably practicable, for working parents, or parents who are studying or training for employment, for children aged 0 – 14 (or up to 18 for disabled children).

2.6 The duty is detailed in the following sections of the Acts:

Childcare Act 2006

- Section 1 places a duty on the secretary of state to secure the equivalent of 30 hours free childcare over 38 weeks of the year for qualifying children;
- Section 2 allows the secretary of state to discharge her duty under section 1 of the Act by placing a duty on English local authorities to secure free childcare for qualifying children.
- To secure sufficient childcare places, local authorities should take into account:
 - what is 'reasonably practicable' when assessing what sufficient childcare means for their area;
 - the state of the local childcare market, including the demand for specific types of providers in a particular locality and the amount and type of supply that currently exists;
 - the state of the labour market including the sufficiency of the local childcare workforce;
 - the quality and capacity of childcare providers and childminders registered with a childminder agency, including their funding, staff, premises, experience and expertise;
 - what schools in their area are offering or able to offer for out-of-hours childcare from 8.00am until 6.00pm and in school holidays;
 - if existing providers are able to expand their provision and what new providers are going to enter the local childcare market; and
 - if providers take a sustainable business approach to planning and signpost providers to resources to support them.

2.7 The Local Authority is responsible producing an annual Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) which should include specific reference to how it is ensuring there is sufficient childcare available to meet the needs of:

- children with special educational needs and disabilities;
- children from families in receipt of the childcare element of Working Tax Credit or Universal Credit;
- children with parents who work irregular hours;
- children aged two, three and four taking up free places;
- school age children; and
- children needing holiday care.

2.8 Information is also required about the current and projected supply and demand of childcare for particular age ranges of children, and the affordability, accessibility and quality of provision; and details of how any gaps in childcare provision will be addressed.

2.9 In addition, the Local Authority is required by legislation to maintain a service that provides information, to parents and prospective parents on the provision of childcare in their area, as listed in Schedule 1 of the Childcare Act 2006 and from 1st September publish this information electronically on the local authority website and update it, at a minimum termly on 1st January, 1st April and 1st September, ensuring parents are aware of:

- Early education places for two, three and four year olds;
- The option to continue to take up their child's 15 hour early education place until their child reaches compulsory school age; and
- How to identify high quality provision in their area.

2.10 There is no requirement placed upon Local Authorities to directly deliver early education and childcare. Some may choose to do so in order, for example, to address a gap in the market or provide specialist services that may not be available via the private, voluntary and independent sector (PVI) or other types of provision such as Nursery Schools.

2.11 Slough directly delivers provision from 8 of its Children's Centre locations and also provides early education via 5 maintained nursery schools. These services are offered alongside a range of other provision provided by PVIs and Schools with nursery classes.

2.12 Consideration is being given to the case for continuing to directly deliver early education and childcare because of:

- The need to secure best value in the use of Council resources and determining the case for continued provision in terms of statutory requirement, need, scale and cost; and
- The need to ensure resources are available for the delivery of core Children's Centre functions.

3. Review objectives

3.1 Given the need to consider the case for continued provision of directly delivered early education and childcare services, the following objective has been set.

3.2 Assessing the case for continuation of directly delivered provision by determining what is essential to maintain because not doing so would result in:

- Sufficiency levels being critically affected; and
- Access to the offer for vulnerable children being significantly affected.

3.3 Consideration has also been given to whether there are no other means of mitigating the impact of the of potential change outlined above other than maintaining direct delivery and the financial viability of continuing to directly provide the service.

3.4 This assessment has been undertaken within the wider context of associated review work in relation to the provision of Children's Centres. The combined outcomes of this review activity will include the determination of options for change to both the Children's Centre programme and the directly delivered early education and childcare provision offered within it.

3.5 It has focused on supply, demand and sufficiency with a view to determining the scope for making changes to the direct delivery of early education and childcare from Children's Centre.

4. Review methodology and intended outcomes

4.1 **Childcare sufficiency data analysis:** Consideration of the contribution each centre makes to the overall supply of provision across the borough.

- **Intended outcome:** To identified potential efficiencies in the offer from a supply and demand perspective.

4.2 **Provision uptake:** Consideration of participation with particular regard to access for vulnerable children and families including those with SEND.

- **Intended outcome:** To identify the impact of any potential changes on participation and access with particular regard to vulnerable children, including those with SEND.

4.3 **Provision staffing and cost:** Consideration of provision resourcing.

Intended outcome: To identify opportunities to reduce cost and secure savings where feasible to do so.

4.4 **Premises:** Consideration of the suitability of premises used for the direct delivery of early education and childcare and their viability of their ongoing use.

- **Intended outcome:** To ensure the Council assets in question are being used efficiently within the wider context of related asset review work being undertaken by the Council.

4.5 Each Centre has been considered by applying the methodology outlined. Initial conclusions have drawn with potential options for change identified together with associated risks and mitigating actions as required.

5. Centre by Centre Analysis

Centre	Summary analysis of directly delivered early education and childcare								
<p>1.Monksfield Way Children's Centre, Monksfield Way, Slough, SL2 1QX</p>	<p>Service delivery context</p> <p>1.1 Located within the ward of Britwell and Northborough adjoining the Farnham ward. The area is also serviced by 3 PVI providers, 7 childminders and nursery provision in 2 primary schools.</p> <p>1.2 Britwell & Northborough has a population of 10.8k and is the most deprived ward in Slough on the index of multiple deprivation.</p> <p>1.3 6% of Slough 0-5 population live in the Monksfield Way catchment area.</p> <p>1.4 Early education and childcare provision at the centre offers a flexible childcare model for children 2 years – 7 years 11 months. 6 sessions split over the course of the day, to reduce costs to families, only paying for the sessions used. Places are all year round or term time only.</p> <p>Childcare sufficiency data analysis</p> <p>1.5 The centre offers 64 PTE. It operates in an area where current data suggests there is a significant surplus of places (215 places in excess of population demand numbers). 145 number of excess places in catchment area would remain without Children's Centre Capacity.</p> <p>Provision uptake</p> <p>1.6 The following information summarises average attendance at Monksfield Children's Centre for early education and childcare, together with comparative information in relation to other centres. There are currently 52 children on roll for early education and childcare provision.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="435 1435 1449 1621"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="435 1435 687 1585">Termly 3 year average</th> <th data-bbox="687 1435 943 1585">% termly average of children's centres</th> <th data-bbox="943 1435 1198 1585">Highest % of termly average across all settings</th> <th data-bbox="1198 1435 1449 1585">Lowest % of termly average across all settings</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="435 1585 687 1621">58</td> <td data-bbox="687 1585 943 1621">10.8%</td> <td data-bbox="943 1585 1198 1621">23.7%</td> <td data-bbox="1198 1585 1449 1621">0.1%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>1.7 Monksfield operates in a catchment area where an average of 346 children access funded provision which is 8.4% of the total number of 4,102 accessing funded places.</p> <p>1.8 The following information provides data in relation to vulnerable children currently on role for early education and childcare (Autumn 2022 data)</p>	Termly 3 year average	% termly average of children's centres	Highest % of termly average across all settings	Lowest % of termly average across all settings	58	10.8%	23.7%	0.1%
Termly 3 year average	% termly average of children's centres	Highest % of termly average across all settings	Lowest % of termly average across all settings						
58	10.8%	23.7%	0.1%						

Children in attendance who could be identified as having an additional need / SEND	Children in attendance who could be identified as having an additional need / SEND	Children in attendance who are currently under statutory assessment	Children in attendance who are currently under statutory assessment	Number of families supported who are classified as vulnerable	Number of families supported who are classified as vulnerable
24	46.2%	0	0.0%	16	30.8%

Income and expenditure

1.10 Cost per annum analysis (figures based on 2022-2023 budget and corporately provided premises cost estimates)

- Staffing: £347,700
- Supplies and services: £16,800
- Premises operating costs: £72,793
- Utilities: £27,790
- Income: £223,400

Net cost: £241,683

Premises

1.11 Two story build located within the curtilage of Claycots Britwell Primary School built in 2006. Top floor is used for family services and partner delivery, lower rooms used for early years provision. Operates for 46 weeks of the year for early years provision. Access without entering through the school. No on-site parking.

Case for change

1.12 Analysis suggests there is a case for change given the provision is operating within an area where data suggests there is significant surplus of places and the provision is being offered at significant cost. Consideration should therefore be given to the potential discontinuation of directly delivered Council provision.

Risks and mitigation

Risk of change

- Discontinuation could impact on support for vulnerable children currently using the provision.
- Associated loss of collaborative work with School in support of vulnerable families.
- Alternative use of premises might present as a challenge, particularly for an alternative provide of childcare given nature of building.

	<p>Potential mitigation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with other providers in the area where required to take up provision and offer alternative places should this be required. • Consider alternative support arrangement with targeted early help and School. • Maintain uses of premises for core Children's Centre services • Secure Property Service advice and input re: alternative use of premises. <p>Option for consideration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential discontinuation of direct council delivery with consideration given to potential PVI assumption of undertaking and or future use of centre should this be feasible.
Centre	Summary Analysis
<p>2.Chalvey Grove Children's Centre, Chalvey Grove, Slough, SL1 2TE</p>	<p>Service delivery context</p> <p>2.1 Located within the ward of Chalvey adjoining the Cippenham Meadows ward. The area is also serviced by 5 PVI providers, a Nursery School, 1 childminder and nursery provision in 1 primary school.</p> <p>2.2 Britwell & Northborough has a population of 13.3K and is the second most deprived ward in Slough on the index of multiple deprivation.</p> <p>2.3 15.5% of Slough 0-5 population live in the Chalvey Grove catchment area.</p> <p>2.4 The centre offers a flexible childcare model for children 3 months – 7 years 11months 6 sessions split over the course of the day, to reduce costs to families, only paying for the sessions used. Places are all year round or term time only.</p> <p>Childcare sufficiency data analysis</p> <p>2.5 The centre offers 70 PTE. Operating in an area where data suggests there is a significant deficit of places. (237 places less than population demand figures indicate are required). This would increase to 398 in the absence of Children's Centre capacity.</p> <p>2.6 Chalvey Nursery School offers 168 PTE which includes 12 'resource' places.</p> <p>Provision uptake</p> <p>2.7 The following information summarises average attendance for early education and childcare at Chalvey Grove together with comparative information in relation to other centres.</p>

	Termly average	% termly average of children's centres	Highest % of termly average across all settings	Lowest % of termly average across all settings
	77	14.4%	17.8%	0.1%

2.8 Chalvey Grove operates in a catchment area where an average of 537 children accessing funded provision which is 13.1% of the total number of 4,102 accessing funded places.

2.9 The following information provides data in relation to vulnerable children currently on role for early education and childcare (Autumn 2022 data)

Children in attendance who could be identified as having an additional need / SEND	Children in attendance who could be identified as having an additional need / SEND	Children in attendance who are currently under statutory assessment	Children in attendance who are currently under statutory assessment	Number of families supported who are classified as vulnerable	Number of families supported who are classified as vulnerable
20	23.8%	1	1.2%	15	17.9%

Income and expenditure

2.10 Cost per annum analysis (figures based on 2022-2023 budget and corporately provided premises cost estimates)

- Staffing: £401,200
- Supplies and services: £17,100
- Premises operating costs: £74,747
- Utilities: £14,212
- Income: £389,900

Net cost: £117,359

Premises

2.11 Second largest centre built within the curtilage of Montem academy, access through the school. Shared car park. 70% of the centre used for early years, operating 51 weeks of the year. Maintenance and repairs and utilities are budgeted under buildings management.

Case for change

2.12 The centre has a significant waiting list for early education and childcare places. The building has space and opportunity to accommodate collaborative services. Analysis indicates that the provision is key to maintaining sufficiency levels in the area. Given this the only case for change identified relates to the scope and feasibility of the transfer of provision undertaking to an alternative provider to

	<p>maintain sufficiency. There may also be scope for change to current staffing arrangements to secure efficiencies.</p> <p>Risks and mitigation</p> <p>Risk of change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on demand on funded entitlement demand including 2 year funded entitlement places. • Impact on capacity servicing relatively high population of under 5s. • Impact given other providers in the area offer only term time places. • Impact on partnership link with Montem Academy in terms of provision. <p>Mitigation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potentially explore the feasibility of transferring the undertaking of provision to independent provider. <p>Option for consideration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain directly delivered provision by the Council and review staffing establishment.
<p>Centre</p>	<p>Summary Analysis</p>
<p>3.Penn Road, Penn Road, SL2 1PG</p>	<p>Service delivery context</p> <p>3.1 Located within the ward of Baylis and Stoke. The area is also serviced by 2 PVI providers, 1 childminder and nursery provision in 2 primary schools.</p> <p>3.2 Baylis and Stoke has a population of 9.5K and is the third most deprived ward in Slough on the index of multiple deprivation.</p> <p>3.3 8.5% of Slough 0-5 population live in the Penn Road catchment area.</p> <p>3.4 Offers a flexible childcare model for children 3 months – 7 years 11months 6 sessions split over the day, to reduce costs to families, only paying for the sessions used. Places are all year round or term time only.</p> <p>Childcare sufficiency data analysis</p> <p>3.5 Centre offers 70 PTE. Operates within a catchment area where data suggests there is a marginal places deficit of 71 places. This would increase to 178 in the absence of Children’s Centre capacity.</p> <p>Provision uptake</p> <p>3.6 The following information summarises average attendance for early education and childcare at Penn Road together with comparative information in relation to other centres.</p>

Termly average	% termly average of children's centres	Highest % of termly average across all settings	Lowest % of termly average across all settings
58	10.8%	26.9%	2.8%

3.7 Penn Road operates in a catchment area where an average of 285 children accessing funded provision which is 6.9% of the total number of 4,102 accessing funded places.

3.8 The following information provides data in relation to vulnerable children currently on role for early education and childcare (Autumn 2022 data)

Children in attendance who could be identified as having an additional need / SEND	Children in attendance who could be identified as having an additional need / SEND	Children in attendance who are currently under statutory assessment	Children in attendance who are currently under statutory assessment	Number of families supported who are classified as vulnerable	Number of families supported who are classified as vulnerable
17	26.2%	0	0.0%	18	27.7%

Income and expenditure

3.9 Cost per annum analysis (figures based on 2022-2023 budget and corporately provided premises cost estimates)

- Staffing: £485,500
- Supplies and services: £16,800
- Premises operating costs: £76,967
- Utilities: £6,202
- Income: £301,800

Net cost: £283,669

Premises

3.10 Large centre built within shared car park located next to Penn Wood School. Shared large car park. 70% of the centre used for early years, operating 51 weeks of the year. Maintenance and repairs and utilities are budgeted under buildings management. Boundaries lines are owned by Pinnacle a private company.

Case for change

3.11 Although there is a relatively small deficit of places in the area, uptake of provision is not considered to be strong at the centre or the adjoining school. This suggests that there is a need for change which could include potential discontinuation of directly managed provision.

	<p>Risks and mitigation</p> <p>Risk of change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on limited provision for all year round and paid childcare with all settings in the area. • Impact on capacity to address high number of families not accessing free entitlement in area. • Impact on campus approach with Penn Wood School for joint targeted work with families. • Impact on local understanding of mobility issues with families reluctant to cross the Farnham Road. <p>Mitigation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with other providers in the area where required to take up provision and offer alternative places should this be required. • Enhance targeted work with families in the area to access support. <p>Option for consideration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential discontinuation of direct Council delivery with consideration given to potential PVI assumption of undertaking and or future use of centre should this be feasible.
Centre	Summary Analysis
4.Romsey Close Children's Centre, Romsey Close, SL3 8PE	<p>Service delivery context</p> <p>4.1 Located within the ward of Langley Kedermister, adjoining Langley St Mary's and Foxborough wards.</p> <p>4.2 The area is also serviced by 2 PVI providers, 1 childminder and nursery provision in 2 primary schools.</p> <p>4.3 Langley Kedermister has a population of 10.7K and is the ninth most deprived ward in Slough on the index of multiple deprivation.</p> <p>4.4 12.6% of Slough 0-5 population live in the Romsey Close catchment area.</p> <p>4.5 Offers a flexible childcare model for children 3 months – 7 years 11months 6 sessions split over the day, to reduce costs to families, only paying for the sessions used. Places are all year round or term time only.</p> <p>Childcare sufficiency data analysis</p> <p>4.6 Centre offers 84 PTE.</p> <p>4.7 Data suggests the centre is operating in an area with a significant surplus of places (524 places in excess of population demand numbers). 307 number of excess places in catchment area would remain without Children's Centre Capacity although local intelligence suggests there is a high demand for and usage of non-free entitlement</p>

childcare. This intelligence includes the view that the absence of the centre would leave a significant gap in provision that other providers would be unlikely to fill.

4.8 Area serviced by 5 large day nurseries inclusive of Romsey Close Children’s Centre offering day-care and free entitlement places.

Provision uptake

4.9 The following information summarises average attendance for early education and childcare at Romsey Close together with comparative information in relation to other centres.

Termly average	% termly average of children's centres	Highest % of termly average across all settings	Lowest % of termly average across all settings
69	12.8%	34.3%	0.1%

4.10 Romsey Close operates in a catchment area where an average of 786 children accessing funded provision which is 19.2% of the total number of 4,102 accessing funded places.

4.11 The following information provides data in relation to vulnerable children currently on role for early education and childcare (Autumn 2022 data)

Children in attendance who could be identified as having an additional need / SEND	Children in attendance who could be identified as having an additional need / SEND	Children in attendance who are currently under statutory assessment	Children in attendance who are currently under statutory assessment	Number of families supported who are classified as vulnerable	Number of families supported who are classified as vulnerable
27	40.9%	0	0.0%	16	24.2%

Income and expenditure

4.12 Cost per annum analysis (figures based on 2022-2023 budget and corporately provided premises cost estimates)

- Staffing: £458,300
- Supplies and services: £16,400
- Premises operating costs: £70,830
- Utilities: £7,559
- Income: £387,800

Net cost: £165,289

	<p>Premises 4.12 4th largest centre built in the grounds of Marish Primary school, The school has since become an Academy. The site shares utilities with the school. The Centre has its own car park with separate entrance and exit. 50% of the centre is used for early years provision. It operates for 51 weeks per year and is open 8-6pm, maintenance and repairs and utilities are budgeted in the buildings management team.</p> <p>Case for change 4.13 Romsey Close operates in an area with a significant surplus of places. Despite this, the centre responds to a high level of demand for its services and holds a waiting list. The centre has been extended twice to increase the provision offered and continues to exceed capacity. The overall surplus of places suggests that consideration to discontinuation could be given although local intelligence suggests this would significantly impact on non-FEE provision. Demand for childcare in this regard is high and well used. Analysis also suggests that remodelling of centre staffing could increase income to enable the provision to be cost neutral to the Council.</p> <p>Risks and mitigation</p> <p>Risk of change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential creation of a gap in provision for paid childcare. • Potential impact on families who appear to favour Romsey Close over other provision. • Potential impact on specific users such as teachers given flexibility and transport links. • Lack of options to accommodate existing children within the area, given the capacity issues at others in the area. <p>Mitigation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion and utilisation of alternative provision in the area. <p>Option for consideration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider maintenance of directly delivered Council provision and review staffing establishment to identify efficiencies.
Centre	Summary Analysis
5. Yew Tree Road Children’s Centre, Yew Tree Road, Slough SL1 2AR	<p>Service delivery context</p> <p>5.1 Located within the ward of Central, adjoining Upton ward.</p> <p>5.2 The area is also serviced by 3 PVI providers, 2 childminders and nursery provision in 4 primary schools.</p> <p>5.3 Central has a population of 14K and is the seventh most deprived ward in Slough on the index of multiple deprivation.</p> <p>5.4 14% of 0-5 year olds live in the Yew Tree catchment area.</p>

5.5 Offers a flexible childcare model for children 2 years – 5 years 2 sessions split over the day, extended childcare 30 hours offered 8.45-4.15 4 days per week. To reduce costs to families, only paying for the sessions used. Places are term time only.

Childcare sufficiency data analysis

5.6 Centre offers 32 PTE.

5.7 Operates within an area where data suggests there is a significant deficit of places. (375 less places than population demand estimates indicate are required for the catchment area). This would rise to 473 places in the absence of Children’s Centre capacity.

Provision uptake

5.8 The following information summarises average attendance for early education and childcare at Yew Tree together with comparative information in relation to other centres.

Termly average	% termly average of children's centres	Highest % of termly average across all settings	Lowest % of termly average across all settings
30	5.6%	16.7%	0.1%

5.9 Yew Tree operates in a catchment area where an average of 392 children accessing funded provision which is 9.6% of the total number of 4,102 accessing funded places.

5.10 The following information provides data in relation to vulnerable children currently on role for early education and childcare (Autumn 2022 data)

Children in attendance who could be identified as having an additional need / SEND	Children in attendance who could be identified as having an additional need / SEND	Children in attendance who are currently under statutory assessment	Children in attendance who are currently under statutory assessment	Number of families supported who are classified as vulnerable	Number of families supported who are classified as vulnerable
12	50.0%	0	0.0%	3	12.5%

Income and expenditure

Cost per annum analysis (figures based on 2022-2023 budget and corporately provided premises cost estimates)

- Staffing: £120,600
- Supplies and services: £5,600
- Premises operating costs: £53,178
- Income: £114,700

	<p style="text-align: center;">Net cost: £64,678</p> <p>Premises 5.11 Children's Centre and St Marys School nursery share the premises with the school managing all aspects of utilities and repairs crossed charged to SBC. The centre is located on St Mary's primary school site. The centre has a purpose-built room for early years.</p> <p>Case for change 5.12 Centre is in an area of high need within walking distance to the town centre. Size of premises presents as a challenge. Given the demand responded to and the overall deficit of places, there is a case to maintain provision. The only case for change identified relates to the scope and feasibility of the transfer of provision undertaking to an alternative provider to maintain sufficiency. Analysis also indicates that remodelling of the current staffing model would enable an increase in income and associated reduction in cost to enable the provision to operate cost neutral to the Council.</p> <p>Risks and mitigation</p> <p>Risk of change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant impact on sufficiency given large deficit of early years places in area. • Negative impact on capacity could be exacerbated given housing developments in the area which will likely increase demand. <p>Mitigation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of independent provision. • The development of the CCG integrated care hub and the potential to develop provision in partnership as part of this development. <p>Option for consideration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain directly delivered Council provision and review staffing establishment to identify efficiencies.
Centre	Summary Analysis
6.St Andrews Way Children's Centre, St Andrews Way, Slough SL1 5NL	<p>Service delivery context</p> <p>6.1 Located within the ward of Cippenham Green.</p> <p>6.2 The area is also serviced by 2 PVI providers, 1 Nursery School and 2 schools with nursery provision.</p> <p>6.3 Cippenham Green has a population of 10K and is the second least most deprived ward in Slough on the index of multiple deprivation.</p> <p>6.4 9% of 0 – 5 year olds live in the St Andrew's Way catchment area.</p>

6.5 Currently no early years provision provided via this centre since the Covid pandemic.

Childcare sufficiency data analysis

6.6 Offered 24 PTE.

6.7 Operated in an area where data suggests there is a marginal deficit of 40 places. This would increase to a shortfall of 72 in the absence of Children's Centre capacity.

6.8 The area also includes Cippenham Nursery School which has a capacity of 156 places.

Provision uptake

6.9 The following information summarises previous average attendance for early education and childcare at St Andrew's Way together with comparative information in relation to other centres.

Termly average	% termly average of children's centres	Highest % of termly average across all settings	Lowest % of termly average across all settings
19	3.6%	42.9%	0.1%

6.10 St Andrew's Way operates in a catchment area where an average of 372 children accessing funded provision which is 9.1% of the total number of 4,102 accessing funded places.

Income and expenditure

6.11 Cost per annum analysis (figures based on 2022-2023 budget and corporately provided premises cost estimates)

- Staffing: £94,700
- Supplies and services: £4,600
- Premises operating costs: £40,637
- Income: £81,200

Net cost: £58,737

6.12 No staff currently working from this centre. General Support Assistant and cleaning support provided from Monksfield Way when needed for services.

Premises

6.13 Shared building with Cippenham Maintained Nursery School, located in the grounds of Cippenham Primary School. Shared utilities. No parking allocated.

	<p>Case for change</p> <p>6.14 Early years provision is not being delivered via this centre currently with the local Maintained Nursery School offering term time only places for 3,4-year-olds with extended offer. Although there is no 2-year provision currently offered in the area there is a case for change given the cessation of provision doesn't appear to have had an adverse impact on the local offer.</p> <p>Risks and mitigation</p> <p>Risk of change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential impact on sufficiency levels given the marginal deficit places. • Potential impact on capacity during holiday periods. <p>Mitigation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative impact hasn't been experienced since cessation of provision • Large percentage of childminders in this area. • Maintained Nursery School could potentially address any shortfall in capacity. <p>Option for consideration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discontinue directly delivered Council provision with consideration given to potential PVI assumption of undertaking and or future use of centre should this be feasible.
<p>Centre</p> <p>7.Orchard Avenue Children's Centre, Orchard Avenue, Slough, SL1 6HE</p>	<p>Summary Analysis</p> <p>Service delivery context</p> <p>7.1 Located within the ward of Haymill and Lynch Hill.</p> <p>7.2 The area is also serviced by 3 PVI providers, 2 schools with nursery provision and 2 child-minders.</p> <p>7.3 Haymill and Lynch Hill has a population of 9K and is ranked twelfth on the ward level index of multiple deprivation.</p> <p>7.4 9% of 0 – 5 year olds live in the Orchard Avenue catchment area.</p> <p>7.5 Offers a flexible childcare model for children 2 years – 5 years 2 sessions split over the day, extended childcare 30 hours offered 8.45-4.15 4 days per week. To reduce costs to families, only paying for the sessions used. Places are term time only.</p> <p>Childcare sufficiency data analysis</p> <p>7.6 Offers 24 PTE.</p> <p>7.7 Operates in a catchment area where data suggests there is a marginal surplus of 54 places. This would increase to 30 in the absence of Children's Centre capacity.</p>

7.8 Area also serviced by 2 large day nurseries providing childcare and FEE.

Provision uptake

7.9 The following information summarises average attendance for early education and childcare at Orchard Avenue together with comparative information in relation to other centres.

Termly average	% termly average of children's centres	Highest % of termly average across all settings	Lowest % of termly average across all settings
27	5.0%	38.2%	0.1%

Orchard Avenue operates in a catchment area where an average of 320 children access funded provision which is 7.8% of the total number of 4,102 accessing funded places.

7.10 The following information provides data in relation to vulnerable children currently on role for early education and childcare (Autumn 2022 data)

Children in attendance who could be identified as having an additional need / SEND	Children in attendance who could be identified as having an additional need / SEND	Children in attendance who are currently under statutory assessment	Children in attendance who are currently under statutory assessment	Number of families supported who are classified as vulnerable	Number of families supported who are classified as vulnerable
6	28.6%	0	0.0%	9	42.9%

Income and expenditure

7.11 Cost per annum analysis (figures based on 2022-2023 budget and corporately provided premises cost estimates)

- Staffing: £96,000
- Supplies and services: £5,500
- Premises operating costs: £68,363
- Utilities: £6,507
- Income: £93,800

Net cost: £82,570

Premises

7.12 Centre is based on the Priory School site, without SLA agreement, the centre is standalone but requires access via the school grounds. SLA Under corporate landlord model.

	<p>Case for change 7.13 Given the surplus of places in the area and the larger centres in the catchment area, there is a case for change which includes potential discontinuation.</p> <p>Risks and mitigation</p> <p>Risk of change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No alternative early years provision within close proximity. • Scope for alternative usage limited without consent of School • Potential impact on 2 year offer capacity. <p>Mitigation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The centre is small in so early years offer could be accommodated by a larger centre. <p>Option for consideration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discontinuation of directly delivered Council provision.
<p>Centre</p>	<p>Analysis</p>
<p>8.Elliman Avenue Children's Centre, Slough, SL2 5BA</p>	<p>Service delivery context</p> <p>8.1 Located within the ward of Elliman.</p> <p>8.2 The area is also serviced by 1 PVI providers, 2 Maintained Nursery School, 1 school with nursery provision and 2 child-minders.</p> <p>8.3 Elliman has a population of 9K and is ranked eighth on the ward level index of multiple deprivation.</p> <p>8.4 10% of 0 – 5 year olds live in the Elliman Avenue catchment area.</p> <p>8.5 Currently no early years provision provided from the Centre.</p> <p>Childcare sufficiency data analysis</p> <p>8.6 Offered 24 PTE. Operated in an area where data suggests there is a marginal 64 place deficit. This would increase to 123 in the absence of Elliman Avenue capacity.</p> <p>8.7 The area is also serviced by Baylis Court (140 PTE with 6 Resource places) and Slough Centre Nursery School (174 PTE with 12 Resource places).</p> <p>Provision uptake</p> <p>8.8 The following information summarises previous average attendance for early education and childcare at Elliman Avenue Children's Centre together with comparative information in relation to other centres.</p>

Termly average	% termly average of children's centres	Highest % of termly average across all settings	Lowest % of termly average across all settings
14	2.7%	30.9%	0.2%

8.9 Elliman Avenue operates in a catchment area where an average of 419 children access funded provision which is 10.2% of the total number of 4,102 accessing funded places.

Income and expenditure

8.10 Cost per annum analysis (figures based on 2022-2023 budget and corporately provided premises cost estimates)

- Staffing: £100,100
- Supplies and services: £13,700
- Premises operating costs: £57,105
- Income: £83,800

Net cost: £87,105

8.11 No staff currently allocated to the centre.

Premises

8.12 Elliman Avenue Children's Centre is located in James Elliman Academy School. The building has shared plant room and access with the schools out building. The centre has large rooms and parking.

Case for change

8.13 Due to staffing issues pre Covid and a drop in early years attendance families were offered and accepted alternative early years provision. Given the absence of provision and what appears to be negligible impact over time, there is a case to discontinue this provision on an ongoing basis.

Risks and mitigation

Risk of change

- None identified

Option for consideration

- Discontinue directly delivered council provision with consideration given to potential PVI assumption of undertaking and or future use of centre should this be feasible.

Centre	Summary Analysis								
<p>9.Wexham Road Children's Centre, Slough, SL2 5JW</p>	<p>Service delivery context</p> <p>9.1 Located within the ward of Elliman, adjoining Wexham Lea and Central wards.</p> <p>9.2 The area is also serviced by 1 PVI providers, 2 Maintained Nursery School, 1 school with nursery provision and 2 child-minders.</p> <p>9.3 Elliman has a population of 9K and is ranked fourth on the ward level index of multiple deprivation.</p> <p>9.4 10% of 0 – 5 year olds live in the Wexham Road catchment area.</p> <p>9.5 Offers a flexible childcare model for children 2 years – 5 years 2 sessions offered am only, extended childcare 30 hours offered 8.45-12.30pm, 4days per week. Places are term time only.</p> <p>Childcare sufficiency data analysis</p> <p>9.6 Offers 24 PTE. Operates in an area where data suggests there is a marginal surplus of 38 places. This would increase to a deficit of 84 in the absence of the Children's Centre capacity.</p> <p>9.7 The area is also serviced by Lea Nursery School with a capacity of 106 PTE.</p> <p>Provision uptake</p> <p>9.8 The following information summarises average attendance for early education and childcare at Wexham Road Children's Centre together with comparative information in relation to other centres.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="435 1294 1449 1480"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="435 1294 687 1442">Termly average</th> <th data-bbox="687 1294 943 1442">% termly average of children's centres</th> <th data-bbox="943 1294 1198 1442">Highest % of termly average across all settings</th> <th data-bbox="1198 1294 1449 1442">Lowest % of termly average across all settings</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="435 1442 687 1480">20</td> <td data-bbox="687 1442 943 1480">3.8%</td> <td data-bbox="943 1442 1198 1480">24.1%</td> <td data-bbox="1198 1442 1449 1480">0.1%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>9.9 Wexham Road operates in a catchment area where an average of 526 children access funded provision which is 12.8% of the total number of 4,102 accessing funded places.</p> <p>9.10 The following information provides data in relation to vulnerable children currently on role for early education and childcare (Autumn 2022 data)</p>	Termly average	% termly average of children's centres	Highest % of termly average across all settings	Lowest % of termly average across all settings	20	3.8%	24.1%	0.1%
Termly average	% termly average of children's centres	Highest % of termly average across all settings	Lowest % of termly average across all settings						
20	3.8%	24.1%	0.1%						

Children in attendance who could be identified as having an additional need / SEND	Children in attendance who could be identified as having an additional need / SEND	Children in attendance who are currently under statutory assessment	Children in attendance who are currently under statutory assessment	Number of families supported who are classified as vulnerable	Number of families supported who are classified as vulnerable
2	28.6%	0	0.0%	2	28.6%

Income and expenditure

9.11 Cost per annum analysis (figures based on 2022-2023 budget and corporately provided premises cost estimates)

- Staffing: £102,400
- Supplies and services: £8,500
- Premises operating costs: £123,172
- Utilities: £5,318
- Income: £80,400

Net cost: £158,990

Premises

9.12 The centre is located within the shared grounds of Iqra and Willow Primary Schools. The building is shared with Lea Nursery School and Mighty Acorns Day Nursery. Utilities are managed by corporate landlord and shared with all providers. Mighty Acorns pay a lease charge to buildings management.

Case for change

9.13 Reduction in the demand needed for all three providers to provide early years on the shared site suggests there is a need for change including the discontinuation of provision.

Risks and mitigation

Risk of change

- Potential challenges in determining viable, alternative use of space would not be an option financially for the existing providers and therefore under used and still a cost.

Mitigation

- Consideration of option for alternative use with providers and property services
- Given alternative provision in close proximity, sufficiency issues not anticipated.

	<p>Option for consideration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discontinue directly delivered Council provision with consideration given to potential PVI assumption of undertaking and or future use of centre should this be feasible. 												
<p>Centre</p> <p>10.Vicarage Way Children's Centre, Slough, SL3 0JY</p>	<p>Summary Analysis</p> <p>Service delivery context</p> <p>10.1 Located within the ward of Colnbrook and Poyle.</p> <p>10.2 The area is also serviced by 1 PVI providers and 2 schools with nursery provision.</p> <p>10.3 Colnbrook and Poyle has a population of 6.5K and is ranked eighth on the ward level index of multiple deprivation.</p> <p>10. 4. 4% of 0 – 5 year olds live in the Vicarage Way catchment area.</p> <p>10.5 Offers a flexible childcare model for children 2 years - 5years 2 sessions offered am only, extended childcare 30hours offered 8.45-4.15pm, 4days per week. Places are term time only.</p> <p>Childcare sufficiency data analysis</p> <p>10.6 Offers 24 PTE.</p> <p>10.7 Operates in an area where data suggests there is a marginal deficit of 92 places that would increase to 133 in the absence of the Children's Centre capacity.</p> <p>Provision uptake</p> <p>10.8 The following information summarises average attendance for early education and childcare at Vicarage Way Children's Centre together with comparative information in relation to other centres.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="432 1368 1449 1556"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>% termly average of children's centres</th> <th>Highest % of termly average across all settings</th> <th>Lowest % of termly average across all settings</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Termly average</td> <td>22</td> <td>4.2%</td> <td>11.6%</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>0.1%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>10.9 Vicarage Way operates in a catchment area where an average of 119 children access funded provision which is 2.9 % of the total number of 4,102 accessing funded places.</p> <p>10.10 Operating at a 92% occupancy average based on a termly 3 year average.</p> <p>10.11 The following information provides data in relation to vulnerable children currently on role for early education and childcare (Autumn 2022 data)</p>		% termly average of children's centres	Highest % of termly average across all settings	Lowest % of termly average across all settings	Termly average	22	4.2%	11.6%				0.1%
	% termly average of children's centres	Highest % of termly average across all settings	Lowest % of termly average across all settings										
Termly average	22	4.2%	11.6%										
			0.1%										

Children in attendance who could be identified as having an additional need / SEND	Children in attendance who could be identified as having an additional need / SEND	Children in attendance who are currently under statutory assessment	Children in attendance who are currently under statutory assessment	Number of families supported who are classified as vulnerable	Number of families supported who are classified as vulnerable
12	54.5%	0	0.0%	8	36.4%

Income and expenditure
10.12 Cost per annum analysis (figures based on 2022-2023 budget and corporately provided premises cost estimates)

- Staffing: £100,900
- Supplies and services: £5,600
- Premises operating costs: £50,075
- Utilities: £6,547
- Income: £82,500

Net cost: £80,622

Premises
10.13 Vicarage Way is a standalone centre. It's the only centre that operates outside of school grounds. The centre was created by refurbishing an existing building. The centre offers a satellite library service.

Case for change
10.134 Colnbrook has a very low under 5 population, there are two schools in the village both offering funding early years provision. There is therefore a case for change and the discontinuation of Council delivered provision.

Risks and mitigation

Risk of change

- No council provision or facilities within a reasonable travelling distance by public transport.

Mitigation

- Maintaining strong links with existing providers in the area to enable access.

Option for consideration

- Discontinuation of directly delivered Council provision with consideration given to potential PVI assumption of undertaking and or future use of centre should this be feasible.

5. Options for change summary

5.1 Analysis of the data referenced in this report has resulted in the following summary conclusions being drawn:

- SBC is delivering early education and childcare via its Children's Centres in areas where data suggests there is surplus capacity.
- Data also suggests that SBC's directly delivered offer is being provided in areas with sufficient capacity to meet requirements and need in the absence of directly provided provision.
- SBC is delivering early education and childcare via its Children's Centres at cost to the Council and that there is scope to reduce this cost by the discontinuation of directly managed provision within the overall context of making changes to its Children's centre delivery model.

5.2 Given the imperative to secure best value in use of SB resources, consideration should be given to the following summary options for discontinuation of directly delivered early education and childcare.

5.3 The following information serves as summary of identified options in relation to the direct delivery of early education and childcare via SBC's Children's Centre.

Early education and childcare delivery options	Potential benefits	Potential constraints
1. To discontinue all directly delivered early education and childcare provision provided by the Council through its Children's Centres	Reduces cost and potentially enables the wider economy of providers in the market to expand their provision where demand requires	Full discontinuation would present challenges in ensuring sufficiency requirements are met and access for vulnerable children in particular maintained. Family access choices will also be limited. It would be challenging to enable the market to fully address potential gaps in provision in the short to mid-term.
Total number of children attending provision as of Sept 2022 potentially affected by option for change: 347		Total number of vulnerable children potentially affect by option for change: 197 / 347
2. To discontinue directly delivered early education and childcare provision provided by the Council from 7 Children's Centres whilst maintaining direct delivery via 3 (Recommended)	Reduces cost and potentially enables the wider economy of providers in the market to expand their provision where demand requires whilst maintaining provision in key areas of need and demand	Discontinuation will present challenges in ensuring sufficiency requirements are met although analysis indicates this risk can be addressed through actions to mitigate impact with particular regard to market engagement and the phasing of change to minimise any negative impact. Due consideration needs to be given to

		the access needs of vulnerable children in particular
Total number of children attending provision as of Sept 2022 potentially affected by option for change: 176		Total number of vulnerable children potentially affect by option for change: 144 / 176
3. To discontinue directly delivered early education and childcare provision provided by the Council from 8 Children's Centres whilst maintaining direct delivery via 2	Reduces cost and enables the wider economy of providers in the market to potentially expand their provision where demand requires whilst maintaining provision in key areas of need and demand	Discontinuation will present challenges in ensuring sufficiency requirements are met although analysis indicates this risk can be addressed through actions to mitigate impact with particular regard to market engagement and the phasing of change to minimise any negative impact. Due consideration needs to be given to the access needs of vulnerable children in particular
Total number of children attending provision as of Sept 2022 potentially affected by option for change: 203		Total number of vulnerable children potentially affect by option for change: 157 / 203
4. To continue to provide existing childcare arrangements	No changes will be made to existing provision.	<p>The target savings for reducing buildings will not be achieved.</p> <p>The Council will continue to subsidise childcare costs by provision of buildings.</p> <p>The Council will continue to directly provide a significant number of childcare places without a clear rationale as to why this is appropriate, which is contrary to the legislation.</p> <p>The Council continuing to provide a significant number of childcare places has the potential of distorting the market and putting other childcare operators out of business or preventing new providers entering the market.</p>

It should be noted that the implementation of any of the above options would require carefully consideration in terms of transition. A phased approach would be required so that families affected by any change are supported to make timely, alternative arrangements for childcare should this be necessary. It should also be noted that careful attention would also need to be paid to implementation from the perspective of impact on staff whose employment may be affected by any agreed change. In addition, due time and capacity would also need to be afforded so that work can be undertaken with external providers who may wish to develop or extend their offers in light of any agreed changes should that be necessary.

5.5 The table below provides a 'centre by centre' summary of the bearing these options have on each of the current centres offer of directly delivered early learning and childcare should they be pursued.

Current Children's Centre location	Maintained as Council delivered early education and childcare			
	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
Chalvey Grove	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Elliman Avenue	No	No	No	Yes
Monksfield Way	No	No	No	Yes
Orchard Avenue	No	No	No	Yes
Penn Road	No	No	No	Yes
Romsey Close	No	Yes	No	Yes
St Andrew's Way	No	No	No	Yes
Vicarage Way	No	No	No	Yes
Wexham Road	No	No	No	Yes
Yew Tree Road	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

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Options for Change to Slough Children’s Centres

‘Centre by Centre’ Implications

Purpose of paper

To set out the potential implications of the identified options for change for each of the 10 Children’s Centres in Slough.

1. Background and context

1.1 Work has been progressed over the past year to explore the feasibility of modifying existing arrangements for the provision of Children’s Centres. Key drivers for this work include the need to make changes to how services across the partnership support children and families, particularly those most in need of early help and where feasible, enabling Slough Borough Council (SBC) to deliver financial savings as part of its budget setting process and medium-term financial strategy.

1.2 SBC has 10 Children’s Centres across the Borough. Each centre includes the provision of directly delivered early education and childcare. This provision has been subject to review, the outcomes of which has informed a number of options for change. The findings of this review work are summarised as follows:

Summary of key review findings

Children’s Centres component	Early Learning and Childcare component
Capacity to provide key children functions has diminished overtime with resource reassigned to address other areas of need	Directly delivered offer via Children’s Centres appears to be being provided at cost to the Council
The model has evolved to be primarily concerned with the provision of early learning and childcare, resulting in capacity to deliver key core children’s centre functions being compromised	Directly delivered offer via Children’s centres appears to be being provided in areas where data and intelligence suggests there is surplus capacity
Core functions and offer have been maintained but spread thinly and unevenly across the range of centres and associated localities	Directly delivered offer appears to be being provided in areas where data and intelligence suggests there is sufficient capacity to meet requirements and need in its absence
Capacity to identify and target those most in need of support is limited	Operational management required to provide management and coordination for both early learning and childcare offer and management and leadership of Children’s Centres. This present a significant challenge to enabling both needs to be adequately met

1.3 The case for change arising from review findings are summarised below:

Summary of the case for change

Children's Centres component	Early Learning and Childcare component
The need to consolidate limited resources to enable children's centre sufficiency	The need to ensure Council resources are not deployed for the provision of early education and childcare unless there is a clear and agreed business case for doing so
The need to enable key children's centre functions to be fulfilled and focused on core Children's Centre requirements	The need to ensure that the sufficiency of early education and childcare offer is maintained without the Council necessarily providing the service itself
The recognition that resources and associated approach needs to enable and ensure the coordination and targeting of early childhood services at the most vulnerable	The need to continue to enable the provider market to maintain the offer so it may meet need and address gaps

1.4 Consideration has been given to the best way of responding review findings and the identified drivers for change. The following table outlines the options that have been shaped for consideration.

Summary of headline options for change

Children's Centres component	Early Learning and Childcare component
Reduce the current number of centres to consolidate the offer and enable an increase in identification and targeting of support for those most in need	Discontinue the provision of directly delivered early years provision where data and local intelligence indicates sufficiency levels can be maintained without it and / or;
Apply a 'centre without walls' approach by reducing the number of physical centres and developing a more flexible, peripatetic approach to fulfilling the functions of the service	Enable the wider economy of providers to take up provision in areas of need
Align revised model to the developing prevention and early help strategy to enhance preventative work with families across the borough	Work towards ensuring any continuation of directly delivered provision is cost neutral and / or transferred to the market to provide

1.5 These options for change have been refined in order to produce the more details options for consideration and consultation. They are summarised below together with commentary regarding the headline potential benefits and constraints of each option.

Children's Centre Options	Potential benefits	Potential constraints
*Denotes maintenance of directly delivered early education and childcare		
<p>1. To create a new 3 centre model by closing 7 of the existing 10 Children's Centres to establish a new model of delivery serviced by the existing Centres at Penn Road, Chalvey Grove* and Romsey Close*. Yew Tree Road maintained as provider of childcare only.</p> <p>(Recommended)</p>	<p>Renewed and enhanced capacity to develop and coordinate early childhood services</p> <p>Reduces cost and allows for the consolidation of Children's Centre resources to enable greater targeting of those most in need</p>	<p>70% reduction in the number of physical Children's Centre outlets and the associated loss of contact / service access points for families in affected areas, particularly for vulnerable children and families.</p> <p>Impact of resultant discontinuation of directly delivered childcare on sufficiency and family access.</p>
<p>2. To create a new 2 centre model by closing 8 of the existing 10 Children's Centres to establish model serviced by the existing Centres at Penn Road and Chalvey Grove* respectively.</p> <p>Tree Road maintained as provider of childcare only.</p>	<p>Renewed and enhanced capacity to develop and coordinate early childhood services</p> <p>Reduces cost and allows for the consolidation of Children's Centre resources to enable greater targeting of those most in need</p>	<p>80% reduction in the number of physical Children's Centre outlets and the associated loss contact / service access points for families in affected areas, particularly for vulnerable children and families.</p> <p>Impact of resultant discontinuation of directly delivered childcare on sufficiency and family access.</p>
<p>3. To create a new 1 centre model by closing 9 of the existing 10 Children's Centres to establish a boroughwide model at Chalvey Grove</p>	<p>Renewed and enhanced capacity to develop and coordinate early childhood services</p> <p>Reduces cost and allows for the consolidation of Children's Centre resources to enable greater targeting of those most in need</p>	<p>90% reduction in the number of physical Children's Centre outlets and the associated major loss of contact / service access points for families in affected areas, particularly for vulnerable children and families.</p>

		Impact of resultant discontinuation of directly delivered childcare on sufficiency and family access.
4. To continue with the current provision of 10 centres or to have less of a reduction of centres than proposed above.	No centre would be closed.	The current model is not targeted at those most in need and therefore does not fulfil the requirements of the statutory guidance. The current model would not meet the savings target and if savings are to be made, the reduction in hours and staffing would be extreme leaving buildings that are not meeting the core functions of a children's centre. Unnecessary revenue would be spent on maintaining buildings instead of investing in non-building based services such as outreach.

1.6 The information below sets out the implications for each centre, depending on which, if any option is pursued following consultation.

1.7 The following information provides further detail as to the potential implications for each centre should any of the options be agreed following consultation. Should any of the options be agreed for implementation following consultation, a phased approach would be applied to the process to mitigate the impact of the change on centre users.

Centre by centre implications overview

Centre	Summary of potential implications in relation to each option
<p>1.Monksfield Way Children’s Centre, Monksfield Way, Slough, SL2 1QX</p>	<p>Should any of the options be agreed for implementation with no other viable option identified following consultation, Monksfield Way would close for both Children’s Centre and early education and childcare provision purposes.</p> <p>Work would be undertaken with partners to enable transitional arrangements to be put in place to maintain key partnership services as required pending the introduction of the new Children’s Centre model.</p> <p>Work would be undertaken to ascertain whether it would be feasible and viable for a private, voluntary and independent provider to assume the undertaking of maintaining the early education and childcare provision.</p> <p>Work would also be undertaken in parallel to this process to enable families to plan for accessing alternative provision in the local area should the provision not be maintained by an alternative provider.</p> <p>Work would also be undertaken with partners with a view to maintaining key partner services on site where necessary to do so should no practical alternative be identified during the transition process.</p>
<p>2.Chalvey Grove Children’s Centre, Chalvey Grove, Slough, SL1 2TE</p>	<p>All options would see Chalvey Grove retained as a Children’s Centre.</p> <p>Options one, two and four would see Chalvey Grove maintained as both a Children’s Centre and as a provider of early education and childcare its early education and childcare provision.</p> <p>Option three would see Chalvey Grove maintained as a Children’s Centre but discontinued as a Council provider of directly delivered early education and childcare.</p> <p>Should the discontinuation of childcare option be agreed to pursue with no other viable option identified following consultation, work would be undertaken to ascertain whether it would be feasible and viable for a private, voluntary and independent provider to assume the undertaking of maintaining the early education and childcare provision.</p> <p>Work would also be undertaken in parallel to this process to enable families to plan for accessing alternative provision in the local area should the provision not be maintained by an alternative provider.</p>

<p>3.Penn Road, Penn Road, SL2 1PG</p>	<p>Options one and two would see Penn Road maintained as a Children's Centre only.</p> <p>Should option three be agreed for implementation, Penn Road would close for both Children's Centre and Council provider of directly delivered early education and childcare provision purposes.</p> <p>Options four would result in Penn road being maintained as both a Children's Centre and a provider of early education and childcare.</p> <p>Work would be undertaken with partners to enable transitional arrangements to be put in place to maintain key partnership services as required pending the introduction of the new Children's Centre model.</p> <p>Work would also be undertaken to ascertain whether it would be feasible and viable for a private, voluntary and independent provider to assume the undertaking of maintaining the early education and childcare provision. Work would be undertaken in parallel to this process to enable families to plan for accessing alternative provision in the local area should the provision not be maintained by an alternative provider.</p> <p>Work would also be undertaken in parallel to this process to enable families to plan for accessing alternative provision in the local area should the provision not be maintained by an alternative provider.</p> <p>Work would also be undertaken with partners with a view to maintaining key partner services on site where necessary to do so should no practical alternative be identified during the transition process.</p>
<p>4.Romsey Close Children's Centre, Romsey Close, SL3 8PE</p>	<p>Option one and four would see the maintenance of Romsey Close as both a Children's Centre and a provider of early education and childcare.</p> <p>Options two and three would see Romsey Close, close as both a Children's Centre and Council provider of directly delivered early education and childcare.</p> <p>Work would be undertaken with partners to enable transitional arrangements to be put in place to maintain key partnership services as required pending the introduction of the new Children's Centre model.</p> <p>Should closure options be pursued, work would be undertaken to ascertain whether it would be feasible and viable for a private,</p>

	<p>voluntary and independent provider to assume the undertaking of maintaining the early education and childcare provision.</p> <p>Work would be undertaken in parallel to this process to enable families to plan for accessing alternative provision in the local area should the provision not be maintained by an alternative provider.</p> <p>Work would also be undertaken with partners with a view to maintaining key partner services on site where necessary to do so should no practical alternative be identified during the transition process.</p>
<p>5. Yew Tree Road Children's Centre, Yew Tree Road, Slough SL1 2AR</p>	<p>Option one and two would result in the closure of Yew Tree Road as a Children's Centre but maintained for directly delivered early education and childcare.</p> <p>Option three would result in Yew Tree Road being closed as a Children's Centre and discontinued as a Council provider of directly delivered early education and childcare.</p> <p>Options four would see the maintenance of Yew Tree Road as both a Children's Centre and a provider of early education and childcare.</p> <p>Should any of the options be agreed for implementation following consultation, a phased approach would be applied to the process to mitigate the impact of the change on centre users.</p> <p>If necessary, work would be undertaken to ascertain whether it would be feasible and viable for a private, voluntary and independent provider to assume the undertaking of maintaining early education and childcare provision.</p> <p>Work would be undertaken in parallel to this process to enable families to plan for accessing alternative provision in the local area should the provision not be maintained by an alternative provider.</p> <p>Work would also be undertaken with partners with a view to maintaining key partner services on site where necessary to do so should no practical alternative be identified during the transition process.</p>
<p>6. St Andrews Way Children's Centre, St Andrews Way, Slough SL1 5NL</p>	<p>Should any of the options be agreed for implementation other than option four, with no other viable option identified following consultation, St Andrews Way would close as both a Children's Centre and a Council provider of directly delivered early education and childcare.</p>

	<p>Work would be undertaken with partners to enable transitional arrangements to be put in place to maintain key partnership services as required pending the introduction of the new Children's Centre model.</p> <p>Work would be undertaken to ascertain whether it would be feasible and viable for a private, voluntary and independent provider to assume the undertaking of maintaining the early education and childcare provision. Work would be undertaken in parallel to this process to enable families to plan for accessing alternative provision in the local area should the provision not be maintained by an alternative provider.</p>
<p>7. Orchard Avenue Children's Centre, Orchard Avenue, Slough, SL1 6HE</p>	<p>Should any of the options be agreed for implementation other than option 4, with no other viable option identified following consultation, Orchard Avenue would close as both a Children's Centre and a Council provider of directly delivered early education and childcare.</p> <p>Work would be undertaken with partners to enable transitional arrangements to be put in place to maintain key partnership services as required pending the introduction of the new Children's Centre model.</p> <p>Work would be undertaken to ascertain whether it would be feasible and viable for a private, voluntary and independent provider to assume the undertaking of maintaining the early education and childcare provision.</p> <p>Work would be undertaken in parallel to this process to enable families to plan for accessing alternative provision in the local area should the provision not be maintained by an alternative provider.</p> <p>Work would also be undertaken with partners with a view to maintaining key partner services on site where necessary to do so should no practical alternative be identified during the transition process.</p>
<p>8. Elliman Avenue Children's Centre, Slough, SL2 5BA</p>	<p>Should any of the options be agreed for implementation other than option four, with no other viable option identified following consultation, Elliman Avenue would close as both a Children's Centre and a Council provider of directly delivered early education and childcare.</p> <p>Work would be undertaken with partners to enable transitional arrangements to be put in place to maintain key partnership services as required pending the introduction of the new Children's Centre model.</p>

	<p>Work would be undertaken to ascertain whether it would be feasible and viable for a private, voluntary and independent provider to assume the undertaking of maintaining the early education and childcare provision. Work would be undertaken in parallel to this process to enable families to plan for accessing alternative provision in the local area should the provision not be maintained by an alternative provider.</p>
9.Wexham Road Children's Centre, Slough, SL2 5JW	<p>Should any of the options be agreed for implementation other than option 4, with no other viable option identified following consultation, Wexham Road would close as both a Children's Centre and a Council provider of directly delivered early education and childcare.</p> <p>Work would be undertaken with partners to enable transitional arrangements to be put in place to maintain key partnership services as required pending the introduction of the new Children's Centre model.</p> <p>Work would be undertaken to ascertain whether it would be feasible and viable for a private, voluntary and independent provider to assume the undertaking of maintaining the early education and childcare provision.</p> <p>Work would be undertaken in parallel to this process to enable families to plan for accessing alternative provision in the local area should the provision not be maintained by an alternative provider.</p>
10.Vicarage Way Children's Centre, Slough, SL3 0JY	<p>Should any of the options be agreed for implementation other than option four, with no other viable option identified following consultation, Vicarage Way would close as both a Children's Centre and a Council provider of directly delivered early education and childcare.</p> <p>Work would be undertaken with partners to enable transitional arrangements to be put in place to maintain key partnership services as required pending the introduction of the new Children's Centre model.</p> <p>Work would be undertaken to ascertain whether it would be feasible and viable for a private, voluntary and independent provider to assume the undertaking of maintaining the early education and childcare provision.</p> <p>Work would be undertaken in parallel to this process to enable families to plan for accessing alternative provision in the local area should the provision not be maintained by an alternative provider.</p>

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EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Completing an EIA is the simplest way to demonstrate that the Council has considered the equality impacts of its decisions and it reduces the risk of legal challenge. EIAs should be carried out at the earliest stages of policy development or a service review, and then updated as the policy or review develops. EIAs must be undertaken when it is possible for the findings to inform the final decision.

SECTION 1:

Title	Remodelling of the Children Centre Programme
<p>What are you analysing? What is the policy/project/activity/strategy looking to achieve? Who is it intended to benefit? Are any specific groups targeted by this decision? What results are intended?</p>	<p>This equalities impact assessment (EIA) seeks to assess the impact of options for change to Children’s Centres in Slough on children, families and staff who have protected characteristics. The change process is still at an early stage. Consultation on options for change are yet to be undertaken. It is therefore not possible to fully assessment impact as the full nature of any change is yet to be determined. This EIA will therefore be further developed in due course.</p> <p>It relates to proposed changes to the Children’s Centre delivery model and the Early Education and Childcare delivered through them.</p> <p>Slough has 10 Children’s Centres operating across the borough.</p> <p>A Children’s Centre is defined in the Children Act 2006 as a place or a group of places: which is managed by or on behalf of, or under arrangements with, the local authority with a view to securing that early childhood services in the local authority’s area are made available in an integrated way; through which early childhood services are made available (either by providing the services on site, or by providing advice and assistance on gaining access to services elsewhere); and at which activities for young children are provided.</p> <p>The core statutory function of Children’s Centres is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To improve outcomes for young children and their families and reduce inequalities between families in greatest need and their peers in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - child development and school readiness; - parenting aspirations and parenting skills; and - child and family health and life chances. <p>Review work has been undertaken in relation to both the Children’s Centre model and the directly delivered early education and childcare provision offered via the centres.</p> <p>This review work and the drivers informing it, have identified options for change for consideration and consultation.</p> <p>It is anticipated that all disadvantaged groups including those with protected characteristics within the target demographic of 0 – 19 year olds and up to 25 year olds with special educational needs and disabilities SEND and their families could both benefit and be negatively impacted by the changes referenced I the options.</p>

This is because the modified service will seek to improve the identification and targeting of family support to those most in needs with a view to improving outcomes for young children and their families and reducing inequalities between families in greatest need and their peers whilst also discontinuing aspects of services currently provided.

The draft options aim to achieve the dual outcome of creating a new model that improves the targeting of support to vulnerable families whilst reducing the overall cost of the services in question.

Related review outcomes are summarised as follows:

Summary of key review findings

Children’s Centres component	Early Education and Childcare component
Capacity to provide key children’s centre functions has diminished overtime with resource reduced and / or reassigned to address other areas of need	Directly delivered offer via Children’s Centres being provided at cost to the Council
The model has evolved to be primarily concerned with the provision of early education and childcare, resulting in capacity to deliver key core children’s centre functions being constrained	Directly delivered offer via Children’s Centres provided in areas with surplus capacity
Core functions and offer have been maintained but spread thinly and unevenly across the range of centres and associated localities	Directly delivered offer provided in areas with sufficient capacity to meet requirements
Capacity to identify and target those most in need of support is limited within the service itself with broader targeted work undertaken via the Targeted Early Help Service.	Operational management required to provide management and coordination for both early education and childcare offer and management and leadership of Children’s Centres. This present a significant challenge to enabling both needs to be adequately met

Summary of the case for change

Children’s Centres component	Early Learning and Childcare component
The need to consolidate limited resources to enable children’s centre sufficiency	The need to ensure Council resources are not deployed for the provision of early education and childcare unless there is a clear and agreed business case for doing so
The need to enable key Children’s Centre functions to be fulfilled and focused on core Children’s Centre requirements	The need to ensure that the sufficiency of early education and childcare offer is maintained without the Council necessarily providing the service itself
The recognition that resources and associated approach needs to enable and ensure the coordination and targeting of	The need to continue to enable the provider market to maintain the offer so it may meet need and address gaps

	early childhood services at the most vulnerable		
	Summary of headline options for change		
	Children’s Centre Options	Potential benefits	Potential constraints
	1. To close 8 of the existing 10 Children’s Centres and establish a new 2 centre model which maintains 3 early learning and childcare provisions (Recommended)	Reduces cost and allows for the consolidation of Children’s Centre resources to enable greater targeting of those most in need	80% reduction in the number of physical Children’s Centre outlets and the associated contact / service access points for families in affected areas, particularly vulnerable children and families. Impact of resultant discontinuation of directly delivered childcare on sufficiency and family access.
2. To close 8 of the existing 10 Children’s Centres and establish a new 2 centre model which maintains 2 early learning and childcare provisions	Reduces cost and allows for the consolidation of Children’s Centre resources to enable greater targeting of those most in need	80% reduction in the number of physical Children’s Centre outlets and the associated contact / service access points for families in affected areas, particularly vulnerable children and families. Impact of resultant discontinuation of directly delivered childcare on sufficiency and family access.	
3. To close 9 of the existing 10 Children’s Centres and establish a boroughwide Children’s Centre model and discontinue all directly delivered early education and childcare	Reduces cost and allows for the consolidation of Children’s Centre resources to enable greater targeting of those most in need	90% reduction in the number of physical Children’s Centre outlets and the associated contact / service access points for families in affected areas, particularly vulnerable children and families. Impact of resultant discontinuation of directly delivered childcare on sufficiency and family access.	
Details of the lead person	(i) Full Name: (ii) Position:		

completing the screening/EIA	(iii) Unit: (iii) Contact Details:
Date sent to Finance	
Version number and date of update	V1

SECTION 2: Do you need to complete a full Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)?

Not all proposals will require a full EIA, the assessment of impacts should be proportionate to the nature of the project/policy in question and its likely impact. To decide on the level of detail of the assessment required consider the potential impact on persons with protected characteristics.

2.1

Please provide an overview of who uses/will use your service or facility and identify who are likely to be impacted by the proposal

- *If you do not formally collect data about a particular group then use the results of local surveys or consultations, census data, national trends or anecdotal evidence (indicate where this is the case). Please attempt to complete all boxes.*
- *Consider whether there is a need to consult stakeholders and the public, including members of protected groups, in order to gather information on potential impacts of the proposal*

The changes being considered relate to the development of a new Children's Centre delivery model. The new model aims to benefit the 19,873 households with dependent children in the borough with a particular focus on families with 12,415 children aged 0-4.

How many people use the service currently? What is this as a % of Slough's population?	3010 residents attended a session from Jan-21 to Nov-22																				
Gender	Male - 1051 Female – 1927 Not Known - 32																				
Race	<table> <tr><td>Any Other Ethnic Group</td><td>66</td></tr> <tr><td>Any Other Mixed Background</td><td>43</td></tr> <tr><td>Asian - Any Other Asian Background</td><td>126</td></tr> <tr><td>Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi</td><td>21</td></tr> <tr><td>Asian or Asian British - Indian</td><td>556</td></tr> <tr><td>Asian or Asian British - Pakistani</td><td>714</td></tr> <tr><td>Asian or Asian British - Sikh</td><td>66</td></tr> <tr><td>Asian Pakistani</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>Black - Any Other Black Background</td><td>18</td></tr> <tr><td>Black Caribbean</td><td>1</td></tr> </table>	Any Other Ethnic Group	66	Any Other Mixed Background	43	Asian - Any Other Asian Background	126	Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi	21	Asian or Asian British - Indian	556	Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	714	Asian or Asian British - Sikh	66	Asian Pakistani	2	Black - Any Other Black Background	18	Black Caribbean	1
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	Black or Black British - African 69 Black or Black British - Caribbean 11 Chinese 14 Gypsy / Roma 2 Traveller of Irish Heritage 1 White - Any Other White Background 356 White and Asian 44 White and Black African 39 White and Black Caribbean 24 White British 320 White European 1 White Irish 5 White Other 1 White/Black Caribbean 1 Not Known 509
Disability	Yes – 8 No – 2883 Not Known – 119
Sexual orientation	The service doesn't currently securing monitoring information re: sexual orientation
Age	0 – 5 = 1367 6 – 10 = 35 11 – 20 = 24 21 – 30 = 424 31 – 40 = 910 41+ = 213 Not Known = 37
Religion or belief	Agnostic 2 Atheist 1 Catholic 6 Christian 26 Church of England 3 Hindu 1 Ismai'lis 1 Muslim 56 None 18 Roman Catholic 4 Sikh 14 Not Known 2878

2.2 Are there any groups with protected characteristic that are overrepresented in the monitoring information relative to their size of the population? If so, this could indicate that the proposal may have a disproportionate impact on this

The current model provides services for children 0-5 and their families only. If approved, the model ultimately aims to provide the basis from which a wider family network and hub model is developed offering support for children and young people aged 0 – 19 and up to 25 for young people with SEND. Given the nature of the proposed development, it is anticipated that the new model will have a positive, future impact from an equalities perspective including benefits from those with protected characteristics in

group even if it is a universal service.

general and specifically in terms of age, disability, race and sex. It recognised however, that there may also be an adverse impact in the short term as there is a need for work to be undertaken to enable families to access alternative provision that may be discontinued by the Council should any of the draft options be agreed for implementation following consultation.

Age

Slough has an overall population of 149,577. Slough's population is significantly younger than England's profile with almost a third of people aged under 18. Approximately live in Slough. This equates to 8.3% of the population.

There are currently 1,367 0-5s recorded as using the service between Jan-21 to May-22. This represents 45% of total users compared 8.3% of the population whole. This is a comparative over-representation but one you would expect given the nature of the service.

There are 1,547 service users over the age of 20 recorded for the same period.

There are 54,116 occupied dwellings in Slough, 19,873 of which (37%) are households with dependent children. This suggests that 5% of households with dependent children are accessing the service currently although it is possible that more than one family member from each family is a service user.

Monitoring information therefore suggests that there is disproportionately high representation of 0-5 year olds which is in keeping with the terms of reference of the service.

Disability

A total of 886 children under 5 have been identified as having a with a special educational need or disability (SEND) according to the SEND Summer Survey 2021. This represent 0.6% of the total population

Current data in relation to service access by children and families with SEND is in the process of being reviewed. Analysis will be provided in the final version of this document.

Gender reassignment

The services does not hold data on gender reassignment or gender self-identification.

Marriage and civil partnership

The service does not hold comprehensive data on the marital or civil partnership status of its users.

Pregnancy and maternity

The service does not hold comprehensive data on the pregnancy and maternity status of its users. This information is held by the partner Maternity Service.

Race

The following information provides a summary of the broad ethnic groups resident in Slough, population numbers and percentages

Category	Count	%
Asian/Asian British	55697	39.7
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British		
British	12115	8.6
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	4758	3.4
Other ethnic group	3582	2.6
White	64053	45.7

Service monitoring information suggests that children and families from the Asian community are over-represented as service users and black and white children and families under-represented.

Religion and belief

The following information provides a summary of the religions followed by residents of Slough

Name	Count	%
Buddhist	743	0.5
Christian	57726	41.2
Hindu	8643	6.2
Jewish	87	0.1
Muslim	32655	23.3
Sikh	14889	10.6
Other religion	482	0.3
No religion	17024	12.1

The volume and detail of Service monitoring information in relation to religion and belief is not sufficient enough to allow for meaningful comparative analysis to determine under or over representation of users.

Sex

Slough has an overall population of 149,577 with 51% males and 49% females.

Service monitoring information shows that there is over representation of female. users when compared to overall population

Sexual orientation

There is no accurate information on the number of lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT) people in Slough. Several estimates for the nationwide percentage of lesbian, gay and bisexual individuals exist, with the Office for National Statistics estimating approximately 2% of the total UK population (2016). The LGBT Foundation places it higher at between 5% and 7%. The Office for National Statistics has concluded that there is a need for greater

	information about LGBT individuals and is currently consulting about how best to generate this information																					
2.3 Are there any groups with protected characteristics that are underrepresented in the monitoring information relative to their size of the population? If so, this could indicate that the service may not be accessible to all groups or there may be some form of direct or indirect discrimination occurring.	<p>Race</p> <p>The following information provides a summary of the broad ethnic groups resident in Slough, population numbers and percentages</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Count</th> <th>%</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Asian/Asian British</td> <td>55697</td> <td>39.7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Black/African/Caribbean/Black</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>British</td> <td>12115</td> <td>8.6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mixed/multiple ethnic groups</td> <td>4758</td> <td>3.4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other ethnic group</td> <td>3582</td> <td>2.6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>White</td> <td>64053</td> <td>45.7</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Service monitoring information suggests that children and children and families white and black communities are under-represented as service users.</p>	Category	Count	%	Asian/Asian British	55697	39.7	Black/African/Caribbean/Black			British	12115	8.6	Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	4758	3.4	Other ethnic group	3582	2.6	White	64053	45.7
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2.4 Does the project, policy or proposal have the potential to disproportionately impact on people with a protected characteristic? If so, is the impact positive or negative?

	None	Positive	Negative	Not sure
Men or women	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People of a particular race or ethnicity (including refugees, asylum seekers, migrants and gypsies and travellers)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disabled ¹ people (consider different types of physical, learning or mental disabilities)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

¹ Disability discrimination is different from other types of discrimination since it includes the duty to make reasonable adjustments.

People of particular sexual orientation/s	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
People in particular age groups (consider in particular children, under 21s and over 65s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People who are intending to undergo, are undergoing, or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Impact due to pregnancy/ maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People of particular faiths and beliefs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
People on low incomes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

If any of the answers to the questions above is, “negative” or “unclear” you will need to undertake a detailed impact assessment.

2.5	Based on your responses, should a full, detailed EIA be carried out on the project, policy or proposal
	Yes X No
2.6	Provide brief reasons on how have you come to this decision?
	Given that this project has the potential to disproportionately impact people with protected characteristics a full detailed EIA should be carried out. However, given that the project is at an ‘options / pre-consultation’ stage we believe a fuller and more detailed assessment should be carried out following consultation.

There are two main dimensions to the project, consideration of options for change to Children's Centres and associated change to early education and childcare provision delivered through them. All options include a level of reduction to both aspects although the 2 options for children's centre arrangements include the intention to enhance the targeting of services for vulnerable children and families, including those with protected characteristics. It isn't possible to assess positive or negative impact at this stage. Section 3 references the potential positive impact of the new model options as they will be charged targeting vulnerable children and families, including those with protected characteristics to enable access to early childhood services. It also references the potential negative impact and associated mitigation given that options include discontinuation of some services.

SECTION 3: ASSESSING THE IMPACT

In order to be able to identify ways to mitigate any potential impact it is essential that we know what those potential impacts might be. Using the evidence gathered in section 2, explain what the potential impact of your proposal might be on the groups you have identified. You may wish to further supplement the evidence you have gathered using the table below in order to properly consider the impact.

Protected Group		Positive impact?			Negative impact? If so, please specify the nature and extent of that impact	No specific impact	If the impact is negative how can it be mitigated? Please specify any mitigation measures and how and when they will be implemented	What , if any, are the cumulative effects of this decision when viewed in the context of other Council decisions and their equality impacts
		Eliminate discrimination	Advance equality	Good relations				
Gender	Men	x	x	x	Access to and benefit from early childhood services including early education and childcare (family and children)		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Undertake analysis and consultation to assess impact on demand and sufficiency for early childhood services. 2. Work with the wider network of service providers including the private, voluntary and independent early years sector to encourage and enable alternative provision as required. 3. Phase implementation in order to manage impact. 4. Ensure any new model agreed effectively targets vulnerable children and families, including those with protected characteristics to enable access to services. 	The effect of any decision of implement any of the current options, would need to be considered within the wider context of other council decisions with regard to related services

							5. Work with external providers to support and enable inclusion.	
	Women	x	x	x	As above		As above	As above
Race	White	x	x	x	As above		As above	As above
	Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups	x	x	x	As above		As above	As above
	Asian/Asian British	x	x	x	As above		As above	As above
	Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	x	x	x	As above		As above	As above
	Gypsies / travellers	x	x	x	As above		As above	As above
	Other ethnic group	x	x	x	As above		As above	As above
Disability	Physical	x	x	x	As above		As above	As above
	Sensory	x	x	x	As above		As above	As above
	Learning Difficulties	x	x	x	As above		As above	As above
	Learning Disabilities	x	x	x	As above		As above	As above
	Mental Health	x	x	x	As above		As above	As above

Protected Group		Positive impact?			Negative impact?	No specific impact	What will the impact be? If the impact is negative how can it be mitigated? (action)	What are the cumulative of effects
		Eliminate discrimination	Advance equality	Good relations				
Sexual Orientation	Lesbian, gay men, bisexual	x	x	x	As above		As above	As above
Age	Older people (50+)	x	x	x	As above		As above	As above
	Younger people (16 - 25)	x	x	x	As above		As above	As above
Gender Reassignment		x	x	x	As above		As above	As above
Impact due to pregnancy/maternity		x	x	x	As above		As above	As above
Groups with particular faiths and beliefs		x	x	x	As above		As above	As above
People on low incomes		x	x	x	As above		As above	As above

SECTION 4: ACTION PLAN

4.1 Complete the action plan if you need to reduce or remove the negative impacts you have identified, take steps to foster good relations or fill data gaps.

Please include the action required by your team/unit, groups affected, the intended outcome of your action, resources needed, a lead person responsible for undertaking the action (inc. their department and contact details), the completion date for the action, and the relevant RAG rating: R(ed) – action not initiated, A(mber) – action initiated and in progress, G(reen) – action complete.

NB. Add any additional rows, if required.

Action Required	Equality Groups Targeted	Intended outcome	Resources Needed	Name of Lead, Unit & Contact Details	Completion Date (DD/MM/YY)	RAG
<i>Enter additional rows if required</i>						

THIS SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY THE RELEVANT SERVICE MANAGER

SIGNATURE:

FULL NAME:

UNIT:

EMAIL & TELEPHONE EXT:

DATE (DD/MM/YYYY):

WHAT NEXT?

It is the responsibility of the service to complete an EIA to the required standard and the quality and completeness of EIAs will be monitored by Strategic Finance Board.

All EIAs for proposed changes to levels of service arising from budget proposals must be completed by (insert date).

All completed EIAs should be sent to TO BE INSERTED

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